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THE

NONCONFORMIST.

"The dissidence of dissent and the protestantism of the protestant religion."

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THE ANTI-STATE-CHURCH CONFERENCE.

[BY AN EYE-WITNESS—continued.]

Wednesday, May 1.

Dr Young, of Perth, presides this morning. He well deserves the honour.

Resolutions are moved on Mr Miall's paper. They go a-head. The first runs thus:—"That, in the judgment of this Conference, the union of the church with the state has been proved by a long and varied course of experience to be productive of highly injurious and deplorable results, both political and spiritual;" the others elaborate, in fact and argument, this proposition. Evils political and religious are enumerated.

What thin, spare, thoughtful-looking gentleman is that who comes forward to move the resolutions? He speaks like a Caledonian. He understands his subject. He is neither wordy nor prolix. He is straightforward: that man will be a thorn in the side of the state church, go where he will; that is, Mr Shoebotham, of Dundee.

Nottingham contributes her share in Mr Edwards as a seconder.

A young Friend rises. His eye is piercing as a hawk's, and beams intelligence. There is a want—a great want—in the resolutions: he is to supply it. Taught from infancy to realise the truth "All men are brethren," he wants to bind society by the golden link of love. Men cannot be brethren if they fight. State churches live by fighting—they war morally against conscience, and physically against goods and chattels. A clergyman, finding it impossible to waken up a sleepy hearer one day by moral suasion, threw the bible at him, exclaiming—"If you won't hear the word of God, I'll make you feel it." So say state churches. If people won't hear the gospel from their priests, they make them feel it—in England by pains and penalties, in Ireland by powder and ball. Her maxim there is, "Put your trust in God, my boys, and keep your powder dry." Oh, terrible perversion of Christianity! But the state church does more—she sets her bells a-ringing when one part of God's creatures murder the other, and half themselves are murdered in turn, and thanks God for the victory! These facts evidently impress the mind of that young man, Arthur Albright, who proposes to graft the substance of them on the resolutions. Well thought of—well adopted.

Another paper. It is read by Mr Massie of Manchester. "Facts," says Burns, "are stubborn chiels, and winna ding." Mr Massie deals deathfully in fact. The statistics he reads are fatal to the state church. They will act and re-act on society; and after all, facts must end the struggle.

Some sparring occurs. Mr Massie's paper is considered by some rather harsh. There was plenty of unction in it. Mr Massie does not gild his pills; nor does Mr Mursell of Leicester, who ably speaks to the question, deal in lacquer. Resolutions moved. Still going a-head. Mr Giles of Leeds moves them. He is equal to his well-earned fame, as the uncompromising friend of civil and religious liberty.

Ireland is now brought under review. The generous impetuosity of her native feeling is here. That son of Erin, who pleads her right to share our sympathies, does her good service. He bids us

> "Be to her faults a little blind,
> And to her virtues ever kind."

We will be so. But he asks for no sacrifice of principle. Adopting Dr Wardlaw's sentiment, "Better no dissent than half dissent," he contends that a pure stream of English nonconformity should be poured through Ireland. *Apropos* of the green isle, Sir Robert Peel says the *Univers* is now in negotiation with the pope. Lord Ashburton, it seems is negotiator, and is instructed to tell Leo that the British government is hindered from carrying out its good intentions towards the Irish catholics, and to plead for a bull against repeal. Leo knows better. He is too old a sparrow to be caught with chaff.

EVENING SITTING.

Amending resolutions. Some jarring; but the members of this assembly can "agree to differ." Somehow or other, they make one in the end.

What fine-looking man is that who has just risen? He has language in his deep black eye, and mind dwells in that full expanse of forehead. That is Mr Hare, one of the editors of the *Patriot*, and one of the Provisional Committee. He reads a paper, prepared by some gentleman of eminence at the bar. It gives the legal view of the subject. "Law and justice" seldom go together in our day. But more of this anon.

Mr Henry Angus, of Aberdeen, is introduced. That man comes from the far north. He was a barbed thorn in the side of the Scottish non-intrusionists—they feel it pricking them yet in the Free kirk. He speaks with measured emphasis, but his words are like "nails fastened in a sure place by the master of assemblies." He moves that the paper be recorded.

Mr Sibree, of Coventry, seconds the resolution. He is quaintly original, and racy. He has studied Horace Walpole, and quotes his saying—"The people push the government, like the fish whose tail pushed its head." That must have been an electrical eel. And so the Conference must be a pushing conference. He is right.

Resolution passed.

John Burnett, of Camberwell, is announced. All are joyous. He verily looks one into good humour. He has a resolution to move—"It leads us to deal with the constitution—it leads us to deal with the Commons—it leads us to deal with the king—and it will be well if it do not lead us to deal with the attorney-general." Well done—this is plain speaking. Strong meat this—certes the voluntaries would not need to be babes.

Has the time come for such action? that is the ground on which he deals with the law, the constitution, the Commons, and the crown. All three are sworn, in one shape or other, to maintain the church as by law established. Hopeless is it, then, say some, to expect the separation of the church from the state. Not so. If the tail push well, the head will move in the right direction. It has done so before, says Mr Burnett. Henry the Eighth made her half protestant, half popish—Edward the Sixth made her wholly protestant—Mary made her popish again—Elizabeth restored the protestant ascendancy; and so on downwards to the time when King, Lords, and Commons were constrained to give catholic emancipation. There were precedents in illustration of the maxim—"When the people wills it the state must obey"—and rightly it is so. Who in theory makes the state but the people? who in practice unmakes it, when it does not fulfil the people's will? John Burnett is right—and right again when he seeks his end by heavenly moral means: these will do the mighty work.

Mr Brock, of Norwich, goes up to the state church giant like a hero, and demands, in the name of Christianity, why he tramples on the dearest rights of mankind. He shakes him by the beard, and he trembles. But he does not mean to slay him—he wants to cushion him—that is, let him down softly. Mr Brock, nevertheless, is aggressive—a man for the age.

George Thompson, the eloquent advocate of the slave, is announced. He is rapturously, franticly applauded—again and again the men cheer, and the ladies wave handkerchiefs. That is too much of a good thing. No man can stand such. "If you knew how much tinder lies in my heart," said Harvey, one day, to a well-meaning, but injudicious, friend, who was praising him, "you would not strike the sparks of flattery so freely." George Thompson's tinder-box is not empty. 'Tis cruel, then, to shower sparks into it. He speaks to the resolution. The subject is familiar to him, and well it may; for church rates threw him first on the surface of society, and persecution for conscience' sake kept him floating there, until his buoyant qualities became known and appreciated by the wise and the good. He has just been to India, where "unmixed tyranny abounds." Ay, Christian Britain, your deeds of darkness in India will live beyond Lord Ellenborough, or your idol temple of Somnauth. But the lamp of life yet flickers there, and there is oil here to-day to feed it.

An angular-faced gentleman rises from the body of the meeting. Some of the platform people look restless, and pitty-patty go the hearts of more than one. Human nature is ever selfish—always prone to monopolise. Two days' use of the initiative is enough, at any time, to make those who use it almost think it their own. The great guns, on that elevation, have been so well-directed and effective—what signifies it even though a swivel should turn round at the other end? The gentleman's name is announced, and the platform breathes freely. He is a layman, and makes a practical speech. He contends for action at the elections.

The resolution speaks of an ultimate appeal to parliament. Why ultimate, and not now? say some; and then comes the tug of war. The heart of parliament is as heard as the granite of Waterloo bridge, and yet it is transparent. If the torch be lit up there and well waved, light will go forth from St Stephen's that will discover the hidden darkness of more sinks of iniquity than those which flourish under the eye of the dean and chapter of Westminster. The differers agree again; and the resolution is unanimously passed.

Thus ends the second day's conference. To-morrow we deal with the practical steps to be taken.

THIRD DAY'S SITTING—THURSDAY.

Mr JOHN DUNLOP, of Edinburgh, presides. He has a warm heart, and "faithful to its fires."

Convoys, in time of war, put forth signals to guide the mercantile marine. The committee of this Conference, in view of action, have signalised the line of duty, and indicated the men who would discharge it. As the creation of the Council they may have an abstract right to do so, but it must be cautiously used. A nomination list is presented. It is intended to constitute the council and office-bearers of "The British Anti-state-church Association," to which this Conference is to give birth. Why not the constitution of the association first, and the council and office-bearers next? Build the ship, and then man her. Committees are appointed to select a new list. They retire for that end, and now comes forward,

Mr Mursell of Leicester. He is the mainspring of action. He reads a paper on the means to be employed. "The language of violence should never be used." That is the soul of the document. Christianity needs no help but from itself—truth needs not to go to the vocabulary of Belial for words to lodge its virtues in the hearts of men. "The structure should be purely democratic"—read Mr Mursell, hinting at the character of the proposed organisation. It would be unchristian were it otherwise.

The assemblage bursts forth applause—every eye looking to the side passage where Sharman Crawford seeks his way upwards. Pleasing commentary on Mr Mursell's democratic speech, and yet more so as anticipatory of his democratic institution. "We shall have against us the united power of the church," continues Mr Mursell—ay, and of the state too. Be it so, "the hotter war, the sooner peace." He prognosticates triumph and concludes. Paper received.

Some meaningless man rises and wants to stultify himself by proving that he is a voluntary. The Conference laughs the idea down.

Not many years ago, a work was written and published by a most unassuming minister of the gospel, who dwelt in a retired country town or village. Few heard of it, and fewer still apppreciated its value. A copy found its way across the Atlantic, and was published consecutively in a religious newspaper. Its truth thus got wing and was carried far and wide. American Christians fell in love with it, and sent it back again to England perfumed with commendation and a D.D. for its author. England now loved it too, and every Christian library claimed it as a standard work. That work was "Jenkyn on the Atonement!" Dr Jenkyn now speaks. He looks an intellectual giant just turned fifty. He deals in great principles and is witheringly sarcastic. He tears to pieces a paper opposed to the Conference in the *Congregational Magazine*, and scatters the fragments among the applause of six hundred dissenters. May a south wind blow some of them to Claremont.

Centralisation is the besetting sin of the present age. It rules in London. The independent and talented editor of the *Eclectic* has laboured might and main to break the influence down. "You are now taking out of the hands of individuals the control and management of dissenting matters." These words Dr Price has just spoken. He is the editor of the *Eclectic*. The sentiment comes home to every heart, and that will nerve the worthy doctor to maintain the high ground he has taken as the unflinching advocate of civil and religious freedom.

A talented and rising young minister of Edinburgh speaks fluently, but the meeting calls "time," and he sits down.

Dr MacFarlane, of Glasgow, too, must speak against time. He states the origin of Dr Marshall's discovery. It dates 1829, and was wrapped up in a sermon on the state kirk, which he unfolded at Kirkintilloch one day that year.

A most vulnerable-looking gentleman now rises, and the meeting forgets "time" to cheer him. That is Dr Campbell, of the Tabernacle, and editor of the *Christian Witness*. There is an anecdote told of a blacksmith in Scotland, who beat his red iron on the anvil, heedless of how the sparks flew and fell. Dr Campbell goes to work in this way. Sparks big and hot enough are flying thick; but he beats his iron

into shape. We can scarcely name the manufactured article.

Practical measures are now the order of the day. These give rise to discursive discussion. The Conference, however, is bent on truth, and shows its wisdom by laying a solid basis for the democratic superstructure.

EVENING SEDERUNT.

Conference very full. Who is that marching through the lobby, buckishly dressed and sly-looking? He makes all who know him get fidgety. He raises his eye glass, and keeks knowingly. "Feargus O'Connor!" is whispered from rank to rank, and everybody looks as if he were "Satan among the sons of God." "Your ticket, sir,"—said the checkman within the bar, and Feargus is in a dead fix. "He takes action"—where? down stairs!

"The work gangs bonnily on," said John Knox, when he saw a lot of Catholic kirks burning. John's zeal is here to night, frenzied enough. His mantle rests on a son of thunder who grumbles roaringly, but with a purifying tendency. "Turn him out," exclaims a youth with Cranmerian emphasis. Who is this youth? The cardless son of Dr Bunting! The intruder is detected, and, like Feargus, he too takes to action—where? To the *Watchman*.

The "constitution" is complete, and the "British Anti-state-church Association" bids fair to become the "envy of surrounding nations and the admiration of the world."

Joseph Sturge is announced. There is music in the name, and every heart enjoys a pleasurable sensation. He rises and addresses the vast assembly, in spirit and language that well become the Christian and philanthropist. He briefly reviews the object and doings of the Conference, and finds something good in everything. Again he touches on the distinction between things sacred and things civil. The philosophy of the age is to separate the two, as different grounds of character rather than simple distinctions of social and political duty. The code of morals by which politicians square their conduct is thus loose. A statesman worships God with a brother Christian on Sunday—calls him a liar or a scoundrel in the House of Commons on Monday—and yet means nothing personal! He shook hands at church with his brother in his *private* capacity; he sends him to pandemonium in St Stephen's in his *public* entity alone. If he brook the insult quietly, 'tis on public grounds; if he resent it, ten to one he gets a bullet through his brains on Chalk Farm, and is sent to the other world as a public man. The state church, too, practically teaches this doctrine. She sends one man to the drop for accidentally shooting a gamekeeper in self-defence, without "the benefit of clergy," and bids another go murder his fellow for thirteen-pence a day, with a label on his cap from the Prayer-book, "Death or glory!"

The one is a civil, the other a sacred duty. Duty to the church—that is, the aristocracy—as the guardian of the people's morals, justifies the one—duty to the state, as the guardian of the people's politics, sanctions the other. This pernicious soul-and-body-destroying error Mr Sturge would get rid of by basing conduct on the single, undivided, and indivisible principle of responsibility to God for all we think and all we do; publicly and privately, the man being the Christian, and the Christian the man. He concludes, and the Conference is full of benevolent feeling.

"They have annihilated our churches, but they have not annihilated ourselves!" exclaimed Mr Henry Angus, a veteran voluntary of the far north, when denouncing Dr Chalmers's statistics in 1835, by which he professed to prove to government a case of religious destitution in Scotland. But the doctor proved too much, and upset himself. Honour to the few Scottish voluntaries who battled the dominant priesthood of the kirk out to a position from which they could not and dare not recede. The Free Church exists because she couldn't help it.

"She sought to absorb dissent, but dissent absorbed her," says John Burnet, who moves a resolution in reference to recent events in Scotland, and in grateful acknowledgment of the voluntary efforts there. Well-judged, well-timed resolve. Mr Burnett said he spoke of *absorption* in the chemical sense of the term. Happy idea, and instructively suggestive. Absorption implies affinity of properties—and if dissent is to absorb Free churchism, there are some elements which the Free church must, in the first place, discharge. The resolution points to them. It tells the Scottish voluntaries to urge Dr Chalmers and his friends to renounce the principle of an establishment. They will do so, when their eyes are fully opened up, and the pride of the heart a little humbled. They but see men yet "as trees walking."

Dr Cox closes the eventful scene. He invokes, in solemn and affectionate earnestness, the best blessings of heaven to rest upon it, and every heart responds, Amen, Amen.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE.

THE Anti-state-church Conference, composed of delegates from the dissenters of the various religious denominations in this country, commenced its sittings at eleven o'clock on Tuesday morning, at the Crown and Anchor tavern, Strand. The attendance, which exceeded the anticipations of the committee appointed to make the preliminary arrangements, comprised upwards of 700 delegates.

It was moved by Dr Cox; seconded by Dr YOUNG, of Perth:—

"That Mr John Burnet be requested to preside over the Conference during its present sitting."

Carried unanimously.

The CHAIRMAN, on proceeding to open the business of the meeting, said:—They had met on that occasion to discharge one of the most important duties to which their attention could possibly be directed; and he was glad to see so many assembled for the purpose of deliberating upon the best means for carrying out the object which they had in view. It would be necessary, from the nature of their proceedings, that every speaker should study brevity in the remarks which he offered; and if, on some points of order, he should differ from some of his friends, he thought it would be better to allow him to make a mistake than to lose the time which would be consumed in setting him right [hear, hear]. He trusted that all their feelings would be the feelings of brethren; and that all their speeches would be the speeches of men in earnest, and of men who took a right view of the cause in which they were engaged. He also hoped that there would be no careless use of inflammatory language [hear, hear]. Their cause did not require it. They were not seeking to carry on an attack against any denomination: their object was to seek the relief of all from the trammels by which they were, directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, held in bondage. They were no less anxious to relieve the piety, the Christianity, the spirituality of the established church from bondage, than to relieve the piety, the Christianity, and the spirituality of the dissenting churches from bondage; and he did trust, therefore, that their speeches and deliberations would be such as to disappoint the fears and apprehensions of their friends; and, if they had enemies, to disarm their opposition [cheers]. They would now proceed to the business of the day. The sittings of the Conference would be holden in the morning and evening; and he trusted that the result of those sittings would be an organisation worthy of all who sought the liberty wherewith Christ made his people free [cheers].

Mr J. P. MURSELL then moved; and Dr CAMPBELL seconded:—

"That Dr Cox, Mr Edward Miall, Josiah Conder, Esq., and the Rev. John Kennedy, be requested to act as secretaries to the Conference."

Carried unanimously.

C. B. ROBINSON, Esq., moved, and Mr ACWORTH seconded:—

"That Mr Swain, Dr Young, Mr Hare, Rev. R. Eckett, Rev. J. Carlile, Mr James Richardson, of Leeds; Rev. Mr Forster, of Highgate; John Dunlop, Esq., of Brockloch; with Dr Price, together with the secretaries of the Conference, be requested to act as the business committee during the sittings of the Conference."

Carried unanimously.

Dr Cox here laid on the table a list of the delegates to the Conference.

Mr JOHN STEVENSON moved, and W. CAMPBELL, Esq., of Ireland, seconded:—

"That all the appointments of representatives to the present Conference, not included in the list now laid upon the table, be referred to the business committee."

Carried unanimously.

Mr JOSEPH STURGE moved:—

"That Mr Apsley Pellatt, Mr W. C. Logan, Mr Henry Bidgood, and Mr Thomas Russell, of Edinburgh, be requested to act as the finance committee during the sittings of the Conference."

Dr MARSHALL, of Kirkintilloch, having seconded the resolution, it was carried unanimously.

The CHAIRMAN then called on Dr Cox to read a paper, introductory to the business of the Conference, on the history of the circumstances which had led to the Conference, and a justification of the movement.

Dr Cox then proceeded to read the document at length. It commenced by referring to the attempt made by the dissenters, upwards of fifteen years ago, to rouse the public attention of the dissenters to evils arising out of the connexion between church and state; an attempt which failed, partly because it was not suited to the temper of the day, and partly because many of those who had pledged themselves to support the movement deserted it. In the year 1842, the editor of the *Nonconformist* produced a series of articles on the evils of church and state alliance, and proposed a convention of delegates to discuss the propriety of adopting measures for an aggressive movement; but the attempt only tended to show the apathy of dissenters at that period. At length an appeal, signed by about sixty ministers in the midland counties, was sent, in the autumn of 1843, to the secretaries of the various dissenting bodies in London. In the mean time, the necessity of adopting some measures to advance the interests of nonconformity, had been seen by a few individuals, who held private meetings, and agreed to convene a meeting of the representatives of the three denominations on the subject. The object could not be attained; but a meeting of ministers was held in Leicester, at which a resolution was adopted in accordance with the object. A provisional committee was appointed, consisting of nearly two hundred individuals, one hundred and forty-five ministers, and forty-eight laymen, who proceeded, forthwith, to elect an executive committee of twenty-one, with a provisional secretary. Having assembled on Thursday, February 8, 1844, they continued to meet weekly, and to prepare for a conference of all denominations on the great enterprise before them. The document then proceeded to state at length the object of the Conference, and to justify the movement, on several grounds, which it is impossible to compress within our present limits.

Before reading of the document had terminated, the Chairman introduced to the meeting Mr Crawford, M.P. The hon. gentleman stated that, as he would shortly be obliged to leave, he hoped the meeting would allow the reading of the report to be suspended for the purpose of hearing him [cheers].

Mr W. S. CRAWFORD, M.P., said, he was bound to attend a parliamentary committee that day, and could not, therefore, continue to witness their proceedings; but he had felt it his duty to attend there at the earliest moment, to express the interest he felt in their cause [cheers]. He was of opinion that there could be no security either for religious or political liberty, so long as the connexion between church and state continued such as it was at present by law established [cheers]. It was only trifling with that great question to resist the imposition of church rates, while they abstained from assailing the connexion between church and state [cheers]. He was a sincere friend to the voluntary principle. He was of opinion that no man should be compelled, in any shape or form, to pay for the religious ordinances of any church with which he was not joined in communion; and he held that compulsory payment for the support of any religion was an infringement of the rights of conscience. These were principles which he had advocated long ago with respect to Ireland, and he desired to join them in advocating them with regard to England, Ireland, and Scotland. Having made these observations, he begged to say that, so far as it might be compatible with his parliamentary duties, he would be delighted to attend the sittings of the Conference so long as it was assembled [cheers]. The hon. gentleman then withdrew.

The reading of the document was then resumed by Dr Cox, who, when he had finished reading, proceeded to address the meeting on parliamentary grants, and more particularly with regard to his own position as one of the dispensers of the *regium donum*—and he closed his address by stating, that, after no little struggle of mind, he had determined that he would no longer be its distributor.

Mr CHILDS, of Bungay, moved—

"That the paper now read by Dr Cox be received, and placed upon the record of the Conference."

Mr W. BROCK, of Norwich, having seconded the resolution, it was carried unanimously.

It was agreed, by acclamation, that the address of Dr Cox should be added to the paper above referred to.

Dr YOUNG, of Perth, moved the following resolution:—

"Various misconceptions of the character of this Conference having prevailed,

"Resolved—That the members thereof now assembled, take the earliest opportunity of declaring that it never was intended, and is not now regarded by them, as constituting in any way a demonstration of dissenting strength, but is viewed solely as a deliberative meeting of such friends of religious liberty as believe a conference of dissenting representatives, gathered from all parts of the empire, to be the best mode of commencing a serious and earnest effort for the disenthralment of religion from the secularising influence of state control."

"2. That, in the judgment of this Conference, the period has now arrived when a merely defensive policy must fail to meet the requirements of our position, or to discharge the obligations under which we are placed; and that a united, earnest, and scriptural effort to diffuse our sentiments, with a view of preparing the public mind for the extinction of the union subsisting between the church and the state, is enforced by our interests as nonconformists, and still more imperatively called for by our obligations as Christian men."

He detailed the progress of the voluntary principle in Scotland, and expressed his conviction that it would eventually triumph in that country.

Mr W. ROBINSON, of Kettering, seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

The CHAIRMAN hoped that, before he put the resolution, Dr Bowring would, for a short time, be allowed to address the meeting [cheers].

Dr BOWRING, M.P., said, he felt it his duty to appear among them that day, to express his cordial concurrence, and to offer his cordial co-operation, in the cause in which they were engaged [cheers]. He would not have intruded himself upon them at that moment, did not parliamentary duties require that he should leave the Conference; he had desired, however, to have an opportunity of saying, that he had, in early youth, formed the opinion, and that that opinion had been strengthened by his communion with mankind, by the reading of history, and travels in many lands, that the union between church and state was pernicious to both [cheers]—that, in order to give religion all its power and influence, it was all-important that it should be dissociated from mundane and political affairs; and that in order to give to politics and state concerns their due weight and influence, they should be kept far aloof from all those matters which man had to regulate, not with his fellow-men, but by thoughtful communion with the Father of us all. He hoped that that convention was sowing the goodly seed of religious liberty—that they would see it grow up into universal emancipation—and that, at least, if not themselves, their children would rest under the shade created by the noble sunshine of religious freedom [cheers].

Mr SCOBLE here made a suggestion as to the wording of the resolution; but it was finally carried in its original form.

Mr J. M. HARE, as secretary of the business committee, read the following:—

"1. That the sittings of the Conference be held morning and evening.

"2. That the chair be taken each morning at ten o'clock, and each evening at five o'clock precisely.

"3. That no new business be laid before the Conference after two or nine o'clock of the respective sittings.

"4. That no substantive motion be made in the Conference previously to its having been submitted to the business committee.

"5. That no amendment be submitted to the Conference otherwise than in a written form, to be placed in the hands of the chairman.

"6. That the Conference do not hold itself responsible for any sentiments which may be put forward during its sittings, except those contained in its own authorised documents."

Mr JOHN JORDAN DAVIES, of Tottenham, moved, and W. GRIFFITH EVANS, of North Wales, seconded,

"That the report of the business committee, now presented, be received and adopted."

The CHAIRMAN said, they had now an opportunity of listening to a paper, by a gentleman well known to them all (Dr Wardlaw, of Glasgow), who was prevented from attending the Conference by the state of his health. He might here state, that Dr Heugh, of Glasgow, had written to express his re-

gret at not being able to attend the sittings of the Conference.

Mr J. CARLILE then proceeded to read the document in question, of which the following is an abstract:—

The author, after expressing his regret at the necessity of executing in haste the task which, in his zeal for the great object in view, he had rather rashly undertaken, threw himself on the indulgence of the friends of the common cause. That which, to many, might appear to diminish the difficulty of the task, he himself felt to be a considerable augmentation of it—namely, his having spoken, written, and published so much upon the subject already. The subject prescribed by the committee was simply the principle of dissent, or the principle of voluntaryism, as distinguished from a state establishment in religion. He was to avoid the discussion of the various forms which that great question assumed in its practical development. And yet that question was one which went far to settle a large proportion of what was to follow. When they could ascertain just principles, they could ascertain, along with them, the general nature, at least, of their results, and the duty which they rendered incumbent; and, next to the importance of settling right principles, he held the importance of following them out in their beneficial operation. Their first business, then, was to ascertain the rectitude of principles—if right, they would be good; if just in themselves, they would be salutary in their effects. The first of all the inquiries, then, ought to be, what was truth? What was right in principle? And the settlement of that question would supersede all questions of casuistry and expediency. If they wished to be men-pleasers, they should ask, what was expedient? If they sought to please God, their question should be, what was truth? Suppose, then, that, in any case, they had come to be satisfied that an erroneous principle had been extensively adopted, and had been made the basis of a practical system of long standing, gathering about it the veneration of ages, intertwined with a vast variety of individual and national interests, and entering as an element into all the political workings of the government of the country, it became, in many minds, a very serious question whether it should be meddled with. They asked, with great anxiety, what would be the consequences, and said that, although it might not have been right to introduce it at first, it could not be dislodged without fearful effects. Where would the reformation have been, if Luther had reasoned in that way? Suppose a man had taken poison into his corporeal system, and that it had long remained there, because, by himself and others, it happened to be little thought of, would they say, let him die? or would they not rather have recourse to that which was most likely to counteract its effects? There was, however, one point in which the parallel entirely failed. In the case of the man he supposed death might ensue, but in the case to be illustrated there was no such danger [hear, hear] The church of God, for whose life, and health, and vigour, and active usefulness they were especially solicitous, could never die. It was instinct with life; and, whatever might become of the state when the church separated from it, they had no fear for the church itself. All that was spiritual in it—all that really constituted the church—would remain, and remain in a state of living and life-giving energy such as it had never known before. While they did not deny that the more tenaciously rooted the evil, the more prudent and careful should be the treatment by which they sought its expulsion; at the same time they contended that for the same reason the more imperative and absolute was the necessity for its expulsion. Truth should resume its own place. With regard to the principle for which they contended, they had by some been counseled to put it in abeyance. Abeyance! that was not the word for present and pressing duty. The principle was not one of indifference, or even of minor importance; and when they were advised to set it aside for a time, they were constrained to say, "We cannot, we dare not, we will not" [cheers]. Believing as they did the progress of the gospel and the salvation of the world to be bound up with the prosperity of the church, and believing the vitality of the church to be dependent, on and proportionate to its spirituality and separation from the world, they should feel themselves unworthy recreants to the cause of God, if they were for one moment to hold the principle to which he had adverted. They were not to be staggered, or frightened, from their purpose by any bugbear of words. They were setting themselves, they had been gravely told, to pull down the church. That was a falsehood on the face of it. Their object was not to pull down, but to set up the church [cheers]. They sought to remove her from the sandy basis of acts of parliament and state provisions, and to settle her on her own rock—the truth, the power, and the life of her exalted Lord. They sought to sever the links of bondage—that alliance of the church with the secular power—and to let her go free. In the second place, the charge of seeking to pull down the church, was, in another sense, a truth [hear, hear]. And in that sense they neither disowned the charge nor objected to the mode of expressing it. If by the church were meant the church establishment, the charge was perfectly true. They shrank not from it; they avowed it; they gloried in it. Nor did they even object to the terms; "pulling down" was an apostolic phrase [a laugh]. They regarded a national establishment of religion as one of those "imaginations of men," one of those "high things that exalt themselves against God," which required to be cast down. They regarded church establishments as one of Satan's strongholds, the pulling down of which was the duty of every man. They had a right conception of the spiritual character of Christ's kingdom, and they felt, he trusted, an anxiety for its advancement and glory. They assailed the citadel of error with the sword of the Spirit. Their great aim was to imbue the mind of the community, and especially of their fellow Christians, both in and out of the established church, with what they believed to be vital principles; and thus eventually to bring to bear upon that institution the combined and never-failing might of public opinion. They sought by such means to complete the reformation—that great and blessed work, for which their fervent thanks were due to God, and which, considering the previously prevailing practice, in respect of religious liberty, had accomplished so vast a change for the better; but which still, alas! left a large amount of worldly leaven to be purged out. The abjuration of the civil authority, in matters of religion, should be the reformation of the nineteenth century, as the rejection of Papal error and the enfranchisement of the word of God had been that of the sixteenth century. The civil authority had been a root of bitterness ever since. By imperial hands it had been established in the beginning of the fourth century, and it should be rooted up, before either church or state could thrive. These remarks had a general reference to their great principles; but he should next address himself more immediately to the principles themselves. He began with the inquiry, What was the principle of dissent?—what ought to be comprehended under the designation of a dissenter? The inquiry, although it might seem to be rather one of nomenclature than of principle, was one of no small moment. His reply to it was, that the only true principle of dissent, and the only legitimate title to the designation of a dissenter, consisted in the distinct disavowal of the principle of national establishments, of all church and state influence, of all state endowments of the church, and in the assertion of the entire independence of the church; or, in other words, the holding of the principle of voluntaryism, or the church's right and duty of self-support and self-extension, as the only principle having the sanction of the church's Head in the statute book of his kingdom. Those were not dissenters who, although in a state of separation from national churches, continued to hold the principle of an establishment. The secession and relief bodies in Scotland were not dissenters when they withdrew from the church on account of certain corruptions in its administration which they found themselves incompetent to rectify. By their withdrawment they became seceders, but not dissenters. Happily now they had, almost to a man, renounced the principle of an establishment, and entitled themselves to the honour—for such he esteemed it—of the latter designation. The clergy and members of the Free church of Scotland were not dissenters, avowing, as they generally did, their attachment to the establishment principles, asserting their right to church endowments, and their consequent readiness again to accept them. That was not dissent. They could not honour a man with the title of a dissenter who did not abjure state power and state pay in the church of Christ under every form and in whatever degree. Let them have dissenters in principle, or none. Let them have out-and-out dissenters, or none. There was no consistent half-way house between dissent and establishment. He was not a true dissenter, who was one merely by accident or by necessity; nor was he a true dissenter who, while united with a dissenting body, recognised the establishment principle by the acceptance of any miserable pittance of state pay [cheers]. He who touched the *regium donum*, at once violated and insulted the principle of dissent. Let them have their vocabulary cleared of all uncertain and half meanings. If the question should be put him, what was the principle of an establishment? he would answer, that it was the doctrine that it pertained to the civil magistrate, as a part of his official duty, to provide for the maintenance of religion; and when they closely analysed the import of that phrase, they would find it on all occasions resolving itself into the duty of endowing the church [hear, hear]. Some had amused themselves, for they could hardly be supposed to be in earnest, by theorising about an establishment consisting merely in the adoption of certain creeds and forms of worship by the court, and the recommending of that system to the country at large. But that was a species of establishment for which he apprehended neither bond church nor free church would be found zealously contending. It would be a curious question in ecclesiastical arithmetic. "From an established church, abstract its state endowments, and how much of its establishment remains" [laughter]? They took it up, then, simply as a question between endowment and voluntaryism—that was, between state support and self support. It mattered little, with regard to the settlement of the question, whether the institution of an establishment came from the church or from the state. To a church—using the term in its popular sense—to a church professing certain tenets, and adopting certain modes of worship, the state held out, on certain conditions, the offer of certain special privileges, and, *inter alia*, certain pecuniary endowments; and it was very obvious, that, in making the church an offer, the state was entitled to dictate the conditions—the pay being upon that side, upon that side must reasonably be the right of dictation, both as to tenets of faith and the mode of worship; and if the church accepted the terms, she became bound, on every principle of good faith, to fulfil the conditions of the contract. Her creed, her formularies, the appointment of her ministers, her entire constitution in all its departments, became the subject of legislation, and no jot or tittle could be altered without the concurrence of the state, without a breach of faith, and a virtual forfeiture of the endowments. That was all very simple in the case which he was supposing, but not if they supposed that the church gave certain advantages in return for those which she received. Whatever might be alleged as to the superior value of what the church gave to what she received, it was still clear, that with the paying party must ultimately lie the fixing of the terms of the bargain. He had assumed that, on the part of the state, the end in view, on entering into that bargain, was the promotion of the religion and morality of the nation, although, alas, a copious selection of historical facts might be made to show what a stretch of charity such a supposition involved. He confined himself to one point—whether, on either side—on the side of the state or on the side of the church—the union was right. Their inquiry, then, came to this—where were they to find the principles—where the authority by which they were to frame a system? Their appeal must be made to the statute-book. The church was the spiritual kingdom of Christ; by him it had been founded, and he was its Head. The statute-book of that kingdom was the inspired record of Scripture, and to that statute-book they made their sole appeal. That was one of their first principles; they held it tenaciously; they could not, in any one point, let it go. The constitution of the kingdom was there; there let them seek it. Its grand characteristic was its spirituality; in that it was altogether unique; there was nothing of the kind upon earth but itself. The question was, whether support by the kingdoms of this world were an article of its constitution, as they saw it in the statute-book. They could admit of no further appeal. They were bound by all that was there, and they were bound by nothing that was not there. When the question arose about a church already established, the appeal must, of course, be to the authority that established it. In the first place, he contended, negatively, that there was no authority in the statute-book for anything like an established religion. There was not to be found, from the beginning to the end of the New Testament, the remotest hint making it the duty of the state to endow an establishment, or the duty of the church to accept the pay of an establishment; and there was no principle recognised, on the ground of which, when circumstances should alter, the acceptance of pay should be regarded as having a divine sanction. It was an extraordinary fact, that the advocates of establishments should so uniformly abandon the whole ground which alone could avail them, and should find their palladium in a case which was necessarily and for ever beyond the imitation of men—he meant the theocracy of the Jewish system. Human realities could never be regarded as a substitute for divine. In the New Testament, all search for either precept or precedent in favour of an establishment was in vain. No authority to that effect could be found in the authentic record of the mind of God by which Christians were to be bound. And, secondly, they were far from resting upon mere negation; the positive proof was abundant and clear. No one could be ignorant that in anticipating the triumphs of the gospel, the prophets gave plain intimation of a change in the economy of religion, which was to be more simple, pure, and spiritual, than that which had previously existed; and, whatever disputes there might be between dissenters and churchmen, there was none as to the entire independence of the church, so far as that record went. Whatever came after the apostles in the history of the church should be brought to the test of inspiration; Constantine should be tested by Paul; the rulers both of the church and of the state should be brought to the bar of these vicegerents of the exalted King of Zion, whom he appointed to sit on the throne, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. In every page of the record, whether historical or epistolary, or otherwise, the church appeared before them as a community entirely *per se*—unique in its character, and completely independent in the means of its support and enlargement—independent of all human aid—a self-endowed, self-sustained, and self-extending community—finding its prosperity, not in the wealth or policy of the governments of this world, but in the life and power of the gospel. One or two passages might be cited on the subject of the maintenance of the gospel ministry. They had at once a general ordinance for the support of such ministry, and a specific injunction as to the quarter from whence such support should come. (Reference was then made to the 9th chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians in support of these statements.) It was not as members of a national community, but as spiritual believers in Christ, that they were here required to maintain the cause of religion. Every subject of Christ was bound by every precept of Christ, and his duty could not be performed by proxy. The maxim was general; it applied both to individuals and to churches. What a strange anomaly it was, to see a kingdom, whose prime distinction it was that it was "not of this world," transferring its own special duties to the kingdoms which were of this world. What had been the consequence of neglecting the Bible principle of state support? The principle had been paralysed for want of exercise. How could it be otherwise? No principle could thrive in a state of inoperative quiescence. Even the better portion of the ministers and members of state churches had learned to speak of the principle by which the Redeemer advanced his kingdom as a "principle of essential and inherent imbecility," as "the most frail and fluctuating of all securities." It was true that those who had used such expressions had since been learning out of an establishment a lesson which they would never have learned in it. They had seen what that contemned and disparaged principle could do when the pressure was removed which kept down its native elasticity. It was a curious coincidence that those by whom the voluntary principle had been most depreciated and decried, should have been honoured to bring before the world one of the finest manifestations of its power that had been for many a day witnessed. He did not say that all which had been done was the produce of the right principle, in unmingled purity; but, although the party in question had not yet learned to trust fully to the voluntary principle, still he hoped they would continually put forth all the fruits of healthy and vigorous evangelical dissent. Thirdly, if the simple principle of voluntaryism were denied, there arose out of the endowment of the church by the state various difficulties and dilemmas which were not easy of solution. It the first place, who was to draw the line of demarcation between things secular and things sacred—between civil and ecclesiastical functions and rights? If the state were to draw the line, the religious freedom of the church was in danger; if the church were to draw the line, the freedom of the state was in danger. The domination of the state had at all times assailed the church, and the ascendancy of the church had been the subjugation of the state. The only radical cure of existing, and the only prevention of apprehended evils, was their entire and final separation [cheers]. In the second place, it was a sound maxim in the government of every country that where there was pay there ought to be control. It was the incumbent duty of the state to see that the work for which it paid was not only done, but well done. What was the consequence? Either the church, by accepting pay, forfeited independence, or the state, by granting pay without exercising control, forfeited confidence. Again, as before, the only remedy was separation [cheers]. In the third place, not only was the New Testament law set aside and violated when Christ's ministers were remunerated in any other manner and from any other sources than Christ had ordained; but in a state establishment they had no support in their capacity of ministers of Christ at all. There was another dilemma. When paid by the state, it was as servants of the state that they received their pay, and they could only exact it by state pains and penalties. On the other hand, it was only as ministers of Christ that the statutes of the New Testament made provision for them. It was a mournful state of things that the ministers of the establishment would rather receive a pension from the British Crown than enjoy it as the testimony of their devoted and loyal attachment to the King of Zion—that they should prefer relying upon parchments, and civil contracts, and votes of parliament, to relying on the voluntary support of the Lord's people, and thus put dishonour on the Lord himself. Last of all—for he was going beyond all due bounds—it was contended that the voluntary principle amounted to a denial of Christ's headship over the nations. The advocates of the voluntary principle regarded Christ's headship over the nation as constituting what ought to be termed his mediatorial diocese, his reign over the whole of mankind. The ancient Jewish system

was a national one; there was a church within a church—the spiritual within the national. That was, however, to be done away. The grand distinction of the kingdom of Christ was to be its spirituality. Its subjects were to be believers of all nations, justified by the blood, and sanctified by the spirit, of Christ. What, then, was the nationalising of the church under the new covenant but a direct contravention of the divine purpose, a depriving it of its spiritual distinction from the old, and a going back to the carnal and worldly? Christ's religion ceased to be spiritual in proportion as it ceased to be personal; and it ceased to be personal in proportion as it became national. Either, then, the nationality of the kingdom of Christ must be maintained at the expense of its spirituality, or its spirituality must be secured by the abandonment of its nationality. And who could hesitate between these positions, and especially when the fact is considered that its spirituality, as constituting its element of distinction from the kingdoms of this world, and from the old Mosaic theocracy, was found pervading the New Testament, while of its nationality not a hint was to be discovered from the beginning to the end of that inspired record? But he concluded by expressing his most earnest prayer that God might himself condescend to preside over the counsels of the Conference, and direct all its deliberations by the spirit of wisdom and understanding, of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord. He trusted that all its decisions would be such as, when prudently, zealously, and faithfully carried out, would contribute to the happy liberation of Christ's church from the golden trammels of her state bondage, and elevate her to independence and freedom.

The reading of this document excited the deepest interest in the minds of all present, and was occasionally interrupted by hearty applause.

The Chairman said, that as Dr Pye Smith, the venerable tutor of Homerton College, who was present on that occusion, would be compelled shortly to leave, he trusted the meeting would allow him to make a few observations, though it would be a deviation from the formal course of proceedings [cheers].

Dr PYE SMITH then came forward to address the meeting. He said he could not refrain from recording his sentiments in reference to the object for which they were assembled, and he would commence by referring to a great principle in which he felt confident all would concur. He regarded Christianity as a system of divine benevolence for the communication of the highest good to the whole human race; for it not merely described and recommended, but it imperatively enjoined, those dispositions of mind, and that conduct of life, which would certainly produce piety, integrity, sincerity, justice, and kindness, in one word the certain elements of the greatest happiness attainable by man. To extend the knowledge and enjoyment of this divine instrument of happiness, was our highest duty and honour, and it was in the strongest manner enjoined by the inspired writings. In order to the obtaining and preserving of the proper effects of Christianity, it was necessary that it should be maintained in its own sacred purity. To a mind devoutly intent upon effectuating this blessing for mankind, but not sufficiently cautious as to using the right and appropriate means, it might at first sight appear that a very desirable method would be to obtain, if possible, the countenance and aid of the civil government. There was, however, a fundamental difference in the principle and mode of action of these two powers. Earthly governments could do no more than enjoin or prohibit outward actions; but Christianity went to the root from which actions spring. A compliance with Christianity would infallibly make a man a good subject of the state; but the being unexceptionably a good subject was far from meeting the requirements of Christianity [hear, hear]. Its laws and sanctions belonged to a system of administration which entered into the mind and feelings of man, and hence they could only be enforced by the justice of the omniscient God. Hence a natural limit was set to the authority and power of earthly governments. Even if it entered into their province to demand religious obedience, they could not know whether or not their commands were obeyed [hear]. Further, they could never force conviction on the minds of men; they must rely entirely upon outward forms. Let civil government keep to its own province of affording security and impartial protection to persons, character, and property; and let religion be left to work by its own energy in the hearts and consciences of men, and each would then fulfil its proper object. That this distinct yet harmonious mode of action was the right one, was clear from the New Testament. The neglect or violation of this rule had led to what were called civil establishments of religion. They consisted essentially in this—that the ruling power in a country took into its patronage and pay some one or more of the modes of religious profession, and employed its own methods of dispensing the agreeable and the disagreeable, to please and reward its compliant subjects, and to annoy and chastise those who thought their duty to God and man demanded that they should refuse compliance. This was the ground upon which state churches were built—this was the principle on which they maintained their assumptions. Their advocates had often put forth the constitution and ordinances of the church of Israel under the Sinai covenant, as an example which sanctioned national churches in their general principle. So far, however, from any support being capable of being derived to state-established churches, under the gospel, from the Hebrew theocracy, Dr Wardlaw, and other writers, had shown that it involved the most decisive proofs of their being absolutely unlawful, and even impious. The first example of a state church at all analogous to that in point, was that of Jeroboam, the king of Israel, that ambitious and unprincipled politician, who took advantage of the just discontents excited in the minds of the people to seduce the ten tribes, and then took upon himself to be the head of the church. In the history of Christianity, the first example of a state church was set by the Roman emperor Constantine in the earlier part of the fourth century; religion had already declined, and sunk into a very dilapidated condition, and he thought it would be a wise policy, quite in the style of Jeroboam (hear), to take upon himself the external government of the church—to be, as he styled himself, the bishop, or overseer, the *episcopus* of things outward (cheers). They knew that from that time downwards the system went on strengthening, the civil government and the ecclesiastical usurpation playing alternately into each other's hand, and oppressing and tyrannising over the nations of the earth. Now he would not pursue their progress; he would only say, that throughout the middle ages, this unhappy system of action and counter-action prevailed; and though there were some good men, who, more or less, resisted the stream, the evil went on increasing, and at the Reformation it was not cured. Now, if there were such objections to the principles and theory of established churches universally, those objections were greatly strengthened by their experience of the established church of England, so called. He said so called, because they could never forget that it was impossible for them to concede the propriety of that term, the term "church" not applying in a scriptural sense to a national church; and further, it was not established, for such a mode of dealing with it was to degrade, to pull down, and to ruin the true church (hear, hear). Now, how did the establishment operate? Its defects are just what might be expected. It trained up the great mass of the people in the belief that by baptism they were invested with the titles and qualifications of heavenly happiness, and upon this dreadful falsehood was built up, all their lives, the most fatal and ruinous error; millions in this country lived and died in this falsehood. No language could express, no heart conceive, the effect of this first lie! Similar was the influence of the system on the ministers of religion. Did not this system afford every encouragement to men to become ministers who were totally unfit for the office? Even if men of piety and talent, the effect of the system was to cramp their energies, and bind them hand and foot. He then referred to the language of Professor Sewell, in reference to the claims of the ministers of the established church; claims which, the professor said, were so awful, that it was inconceivable that they could be maintained unless they were true and genuine. He could not pass by the injustice and tyranny of the established church in the country districts, where nearly the whole population were under the influence of the clergyman. Again, was not the influence of the clergy exerted to prevent the return of able men, who would vote for measures which would be beneficial to the country? On nearly all occasions the predominant party were found opposed to any measures of importance to the welfare of the country. He dreaded that, if this attempt to awaken the country to its danger did not succeed, an awful convulsion was at hand. The country would not much longer be trammeled by this system, or suffer its interests to be immolated on the altar of church pride and tory usurpation. Therefore he drew the conclusion, that it was their imperative duty to seek the removal of this enormous evil by such means as they were then devising (cheers).

Dr ADAM THOMSON, of Coldstream, moved:—

"That the paper from Dr Wardlaw, now read, be received, and placed upon the record of the Conference."

Dr JENKYN, of Coward college, seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

Mr MIALL then moved the adjournment of the Conference until five o'clock.

Dr COX seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

The Conference accordingly adjourned until five o'clock.

EVENING SITTING.

The Conference resumed its sittings at five o'clock, when it was moved by Mr PATRICK THOMPSON, of Chatham, seconded by JOHN LEE, D.C.L., and carried unanimously—

"That the Rev. Andrew Marshall, D.D., LL.D., of Kirkintilloch, be requested to preside over the Conference during its present sitting."

The CHAIRMAN, after a few general observations, proceeded to speak of the superiority of the object for which they were assembled, to any other which occupied the public attention, and impressed on the meeting the duty of perseverance until that object was attained. To the difficulties of the enterprise they were not, indeed, insensible; but it was only the timid and the wavering who would be frightened by them, and he trusted they were not of that number [cheers]. They had had some experience in this matter in Scotland [hear, hear]. Nearly ten years since, he (the Chairman) came to the metropolis, accompanied by Dr Heugh, with a memorial to Earl Grey, signed by nearly fifty thousand of the inhabitants of Glasgow, praying for the separation of church and state [cheers]. For a time the controversy was carried on chiefly by the press, the clergy of the establishment generally standing aloof from it, many of them affecting to regard it with indifference, and others with contempt. By and by voluntary church associations were formed, and the voluntaries were seen, as a distinct party, exulting in their principles and determined to spread them. Then the fears of churchmen were awakened; they began to tremble for their Zion; the warfare commenced in good earnest; and he need not inform that assembly what was the result. In an unlucky hour—unlucky, in one sense, for themselves, but most lucky for all the world besides—the ministers of the establishment resolved that they would give the world a practical demonstration that they could be quite a free church, and yet an established church. How did they proceed to do this? They did more than most men could have done [hear]. They trampled on the laws; they set at defiance the authority of the civil courts; and they appeared determined to bring the government to their feet. The government, however, to its honour be it spoken, in this instance had stood firm, and their friends had been compelled to march out [hear]. That was the true history of the Scottish disruption—an amazing event, and one fraught with instruction. It suggested a variety of lessons; and one of the first was, that no established church could be a free church [hear, hear]. Had it been possible for an established church to be a free church, the Intrusionists of Scotland had at that moment been the church of Scotland. Their secession was a decided proof, that, within the pale of an establishment, religious liberty could not exist [hear]. It was not a little singular, that their free church friends should be so strenuous in their new position, in asserting the establishment principle [laughter]. They must exercise patience towards them, for their eyes were but partially enlightened at present [hear, hear, and cheers]. They were now fairly out of the establishment, and their great leader, Dr Chalmers, confessed that they were as effectually cut off from the establishment as if a wall of brass had been erected between them and it. Another thing, suggested by the circumstances to which he referred, was, that the disruption was to be traced ultimately to the Scottish dissenters. It was in opposing them that the Free Church party had thrown itself out of the establishment [hear]. They had found it necessary, from time to time, to take up new positions, and at length they took up one by which they were exposed to danger from another quarter. There was then little left for the dissenters but to enjoy the sport, only occasionally reminding their friends that they were watching all their movements, and that if they flinched they would not spare them [laughter]. Now, what had been done on a small scale, might be done on a great scale. Should they not, he asked, meditate nobler and more difficult achievements [cheers]? Had the Scottish establishment fallen? Then why should they fear to attack the mighty establishment of England? He was aware it was more powerful, but then it was also more vulnerable [hear, hear]. It was a carcase as bloated as it was huge—as unwieldy and defenceless as enormous in its magnitude [cheers]. He would say to the dissenters, who were mustering their strength to attack the establishment—he would say to them, in the words of the prophet to the assailants of Babylon, "You that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows" [cheers, and laughter]. Let them attack her in her Puseyism; let them attack her in her hierarchy. What could be more irrational and unscriptural than either? Let them attack her in her government, or rather in her want of government; in her discipline, or rather in her want of discipline [cheers]. Let them attack her in her thousand abuses which rendered her so offensive to all classes of men, but especially to religious men. We need not say, that she must sink under such an attack; and then, so far as she was a spiritual church, the transformation would be the happiest, even for herself, resembling that of the fabled phœnix springing out of its ashes, her wings resplendent as silver, and her feathers as fine gold [cheers].

The Rev. C. STOVEL proposed the following resolution:—

"That this Conference, while emphatically disclaiming all intention to assail any church apart from its connexion with the state, is constrained by a deep sense of religious obligation to Jesus Christ, the sole head of the church, to express its solemn determination to persevere in opposition to the principle on which state establishments of religion are founded, as contradistinguished from that which lies at the foundation of dissent from such establishments.

"That this Conference, consequently, distinctly disavows the scriptural authority of all state establishments of religion, and of all state endowments of religion, under any of its denominations, and explicitly asserts the entire independence of the church of Christ, which is to be secured only by the practical admission of the principle of self-support and self-extension, as imperatively demanded by the authority of the New Testament.

"That regarding the principle of state establishments of religion as especially involving the doctrine, that it pertains to the civil magistrate, as an incumbent part of his public duty, to provide for the interests of religion, this Conference maintains that, whether the proposal of alliance come from the church or from the state, any union between the two must be incompatible with the laws contained in the statute-book of Christ, as king in his church, inasmuch as, while there is no authority in that book for any such union, it is positively prohibited in numerous passages, embodying facts, principles, and precepts, at direct variance therewith.

"That any state or secular provision for the diffusion of religion, or for the support of its ministers, involves the opponents of the New Testament method in various difficulties and dilemmas; rendering it impossible to draw the line of demarcation between things secular and things sacred; causing either the church, by submitting to the control of the state, to sacrifice its independence, or the state, by yielding its control, to violate its trust, and bringing about a state of things in which the professed ministers of Christ derive their subsistence, not in the relation which they sustain towards the church, but as the retainers of those by whom they may be paid.

"That, so far from admitting the voluntary principle to amount, as sometimes alleged, to a denial of the headship of Christ over the nations, this Conference regards the principle of state establishments of religion as inevitably having that effect; inasmuch as Christianity has superseded Judaism, the principle of which was national, by a system purely spiritual in its character."

He hoped it would be clearly understood, that in passing this resolution they did not commit themselves to every sentiment which the paper contained [hear, hear]. He highly approved of the paper itself, and he did not recollect a single sentence in which he did not concur, but the principle he had mentioned might possibly relieve other minds from some difficulty [hear, hear]. The great question before them seemed to him to turn on two points: first, whether in their circumstances such sentiments as those of the resolutions ought to be uttered; secondly, whether they were drawn up with sufficient regard to the feelings, characters, and interests of others. On both grounds, he thought the resolution ought

to be adopted [hear, hear]. He thought that the sentiments should be uttered partly because they were true. If Dr Wardlaw's paper accomplished no other result whatever, it would fully justify them in adopting this resolution [cheers]. All truths might not require at every time to be uttered: but whatever truth involved the honour of the Redeemer, ought, in his opinion, never to be withheld. The points on which the honour of the Redeemer seemed to him to be affected by the great truths and principles contained in the resolution, were of the most serious kind. The movements of church establishments affected, in all their forms, the free exercise of conscience; they affected the character and working of the Christian church; they influenced the well-being of the population of the empire; and they implicated the name of the Redeemer in the most tremendous wrongs [hear, hear]. Take what form it would, an establishment necessarily required either the compromise of conscience or the endurance of persecution [hear, hear]. It was not the business of the Conference to go into all the political evils which resulted from establishments of religion; yet one point ought not to be lost sight of. The Christian religion was intended to pour all its consolations and all its light on a dark and benighted world; where establishments had existed, it had been seen that they communicated not light to guide, but embarrassment to entangle [hear, hear]. The establishment of this country pressed like an incubus on society at large, and especially upon the lower orders. If, indeed, that were its only evil result, it might not be their duty to assail it: but, when that which had been given to afford comfort to the sorrowful, and to benefit all, was made the means of misguiding the poor, and of afflicting all orders in the community; and when this wrong was associated with the name of the Redeemer, they were entitled to stand forth and demand the dissolution of that alliance which produced such evil consequences. The desecration was too gross to be endured by any who loved the name of the Redeemer. If a state accomplished any object by means of a church, the first axiom of its policy must be, that it should have with it the opinion of the multitude. It was gravely proposed by some, that in Ireland they should transfer a part of the state patronage to a society or a state church, which had more of the affection and sympathy of the people of Ireland. In Scotland, the presbyterian church was taken, as that which was most appropriate; in England episcopacy; in Malta they had the papacy; in Ceylon, Buddhism: in other places just whatever they could find [laughter]. He held that a policy which was based on such a principle as that, could never be secure under any circumstances whatever, nor the purity of Christian discipline. Wherever there was a state religion that religion must be beat down and fitted to the state of nature, and thereby it must necessary be deformed. There must be first, the constituency of the church; secondly, the patrons of the church; and thirdly, the officers of the church; and the whole system must be made to suit the age and the nature of man. These remarks applied to establishments, whether they were or were not under state control. Some persons had conceived that, if there could be an alliance without control, all the evils now existing would be entirely removed. Scotland was now working out the great problem, that it was impossible to have a state alliance without state control. This was a point worthy of deep consideration. He cared not much about names; but he contended that, if either papists, presbyterians, independents, or baptists, were allied to the state, and not under the control of the state, the church would be blasted; and the more true the thing was in theory, the greater the calamity both to the nation and the world. A church which depended on the support of the state was invariably brought into a position in which it forfeited its claim to the name of a Christian church. He trusted that the resolution which he had proposed would be carried out by them with unvarying and unflinching determination. It was said, when the movement was first proposed, that it would end only in discord. He was thankful for what he had witnessed already [cheers]—and he trusted that, by the result of the Conference, they would prove the falsehood of all such predictions. Five hundred and fifty men, pledged to each other in this great cause, would not, he felt confident, be found unfaithful [hear, hear]. It had been said, too, that they would consist only of a few of the mean and the worthless. He wished those who thought so had heard the paper of Dr Wardlaw, in which the utterances of moral strength and beauty were blended so harmoniously together [cheers]. It was said, also, that for the last ten years the enemy had been on the alert. For his own part, he did not know what they had lost by this, unless it were their inconsistency. The fact alleged only proved that they had assailed the enemy in the right way. If he could once effect a raw in the hide of the great leviathan, he would keep the caustic there, however it might flounder [cheers]. In conclusion, he said, that though they might rush to their object like the Rhine fall, and their way be like the cataract, yet there shone the bow of hope in the cloud, and they saw one coming who would give liberty to his people.

Professor M'Michael, of the Relief church of Scotland, seconded the resolution. He observed, that the dissenters of England were a strong body. They had given one proof of their strength in Sir James Graham's abominable Education bill, and he hoped they would never forget the lesson which they learned on that occasion [hear, hear]. They had truth on their side, why should they be afraid [cheers]? They had common sense on their side, why should they be afraid? They had the Bible on their side, why should they be afraid? They had God on their side, why should they be afraid? They could not but prosper [cheers]. The resolution said it was impossible to draw the line of demarcation between things secular and things sacred. All experience bore testimony to the truth of the assertion. In every case, they had either the state encroaching on the things of the church, or the church encroaching on the things of the state [hear, hear]. The advocates of church establishments said, "You are mistaken; we are as free as you are in spiritual matters." They had since discovered their mistake. He rejoiced at the course which had been taken by their friends in Scotland; the greatest injury would otherwise have been done to the clerical character. Had they remained in the establishment, men would have said that they forfeited their principles rather than sacrifice their stipends. Although as yet they disclaimed the name of the principle by which they were fed, he trusted that they would exemplify that principle in all its fulness. The eye being single, the whole body would be full of light [cheers]. Their object, as a Conference, was to rescue the church of Christ from the degradation under which it had laid for ages; their object was to extend the truth throughout the wide world, by pulling down that system which they believed had been the great cause of dimming the brightness of the Redeemer's glory, and preventing the whole world from rejoicing in the salvation of God [cheers].

Mr Joseph Sturge said, he came forward with great reluctance, to suggest an alteration in the resolution; and, were not a principle involved, he would not trespass on the attention of the meeting. It was well known that he belonged to a society which held the opinion, that under the Christian dispensation, what they called the order of priesthood was abrogated. Perhaps not many present sympathised with him in that respect—[cries of "All, all"]—at least, not in the way that he understood the word "priesthood" [hear, hear]. He could not at all agree in the opinion, that it did not belong to religious people to meddle with politics [hear, hear]. The distinction between religious and civil duties was, he believed, a distinction raised by priestcraft, and not by scripture. Holding such an opinion he objected to the words in the fourth paragraph, "rendering it impossible to draw the line of demarcation between things secular and things sacred." He thought the words were at least liable to some misconstruction; and it would be a relief to his mind if the meeting would allow them to be withdrawn [hear, hear].

A discussion as to the effect of these words ensued, which ended in the adoption of the suggestion of Mr J. Carlile, of the following words instead of those originally proposed:—"Rendering it impossible for the advocates of such provision to draw the line of demarcation," &c.

The resolution, in its amended form, was put to the meeting, and carried unanimously.

Mr Miall then read a paper on "The practical evils resulting from the union of church and state," of which the following is a brief abstract:—

National establishments might be submitted to the test, not only of reason and scripture, but also of experience; and the history of state churches, carefully studied, was little calculated to leave on the minds of candid Christians an impression in their favour. As an expedient to subserve the ends of political party, by keeping the people in subjection to their rulers, they had no doubt succeeded: but, tried by all the higher and more appropriate standards; judged of by the practical influence they had brought to bear upon the intellectual, moral, and religious character of our race, they were convicted, not merely of failure, but of incalculable mischief. The church had a sphere of labour altogether distinct from that of the state, and union between them had proved an injury to both. Its uniform tendency had been to cripple the movements of the state, and to destroy the vitality of the church. It was admitted that the state, viewed as comprehending the interests of rulers, apart from those of their subjects, had reaped some advantage from its connexion with the church. The alliance between them had aided the civil magistrate in overawing his subjects, and in exacting from them implicit obedience to his will, even when that will might have trampled upon human rights. History proved that, save where their own privileges had been in question, established churches had invariably taken part with political might against popular right. Emphatically might this be affirmed of the state churches in this empire. To the interests of the public that intimate sympathy between the supreme political power and the church, which a constitutional union between them implied, had proved to be detrimental beyond the possibility of calculation. By means of it the civil magistrate had perverted to his own secular and often selfish purposes, influences whose sacred character—concern for the spiritual welfare of mankind—ought to have carefully shielded from prostitution. The amount of vital godliness which might be found in connexion with established churches was wielded for political ends, and gave a fearful stimulus to despotic tendencies. In checking all improvement, in stinting the growth of public political opinion, in retarding the progress of education, in defending monopoly, in gilding over the atrocities of war, it was questionable whether the state could have found elsewhere so zealous, efficient, and successful an agency as that of an established priesthood. A body of religious teachers, supported by the state, had all their temporal interests bound up with those of the governing class, and they might fairly be expected to use the influence they possessed in abetting the principles and practices most in favour with that class. Hence all religious establishments had betrayed a leaning towards oppression, and tyranny had invariably had their co-operation, in breaking down the spirit of the people. The evil influence of state churches exerted against progression, in great crises, was far less deleterious than that co-operating, noiseless, but ever operative power which they put forth against political and social melioration of the more gradual kind. There was, in the public mind, a constant tendency to progress. Upon this tendency state churches acted as a serious check; they were amongst the foremost to defend abuses, they were the last to give up an error. The history of this country, and especially that of Ireland, afforded too ample proof of the truth of this remark. Closely connected with this evil was the rancour infused into political strife. Few state measures were viewed in reference to their own intrinsic merits, but in reference to their probable bearing on the national church. So glaring had this evil now become, that electoral bodies were canvassed in the name of Christian truth, political sentiment was made the test of religious character, and men were denounced as infidels, or hailed as pillars of the church, according as they might happen to give their vote. Nor was the injurious influence of a state church confined within the limits already specified. It affected the whole machinery of civil government, and materially interfered with its freedom of action. It perpetually clashed with the rights of citizenship, and at the door of almost every office, municipal, parliamentary, or administrative, imposed an arbitrary and galling restriction. The throne itself was injured by the association, and in the choice of its policy, as well as of its servants, it was under bondage to the church. The unfriendliness of national establishments to popular education constituted a yet graver charge against them. Until by the voluntary efforts which they discouraged and contemned, their own influence was seriously lessened, and their hold upon the popular mind loosened, they had looked on the ignorance of the masses with every mark of unconcern. That they had of late put forth great exertions in the cause of education, was owing to the fact that concern for their own ascendancy had pricked them into zeal. The work taken up by others was, for a lengthened period, prosecuted with vigour and rewarded by large success, before they awoke to a sense of their duty; and then their claim to be regarded as the exclusively authorised instructors of the people too plainly indicated a more earnest care to recover their sacerdotal influence than to elevate the minds of the labouring classes. To the connexion between the church and state, one more political evil might be traced. Between state churches and monopoly in every form there was a visible sympathy. It was still more important to observe that the sanctity thrown by national religious establishments over the military profession—the employment of the army in the defence of the church—the solemn consecration of regimental colours—the practice of adorning edifices, looked upon as sacred, with martial trophies, had contributed not a little to conceal the atrocities and horrors of war, and to induce a very general belief that the prowess of the soldier in the service of his country was both honourable to man and acceptable to God. Whilst this opinion prevailed, wars would never cease. In closing this cursory and too imperfect notice it must not be forgotten that the state itself suffered from the connexion, and that on this ground alone national establishments were open to impeachment. But the political side of the question dwindled into insignificance when compared with the spiritual; and it was upon this latter that the main stress of their objections would be found to rest. That the state gained nothing by the union had been seen; in what respects the church lost by it remained to be considered. Legislative interposition for the support of religious institutions necessarily misrepresented the nature and the object of divine revelation. Christianity addressed itself exclusively to the conscience and the heart. This arrangement state churches practically overturned. The union between church and state was a national denial of the spiritual power of divine truth to compass the designs of God. The moral of Christianity could not be understood from the practical exhibition of it afforded by establishments. Its spirituality, its purity, its power, its peace, its love, all were misrepresented by the union between church and state. Out of this radical defect of national establishments of religion sprang evils the extent of which none could measure, and the number of which none could accurately compute. Their natural and genuine product was a species of religion corresponding in all its main features with its instrumental cause—a religion, not of power, but of profession; a religion which never penetrated the inner man, which was summed up in a decent attention to ecclesiastical rites, a general profession which was not borne out by the reality, a worldly representation of Christianity produced, naturally enough, but a worldly type of it, and whole classes of men, in regard to their highest interests, were thus mowed down by a lie. Take society in this empire as an illustration. What was its prevailing tone? Was godliness the prominent characteristic to be found there? Did it breathe in the speeches of their senators, or perfume the reputation of their nobles? Did it preside over the movements of commerce, or regulate the spirit of trade? For three hundred years the protestant establishment had been at work in this country, and yet the popular notion of what Christianity was, did not rise above this contemptible level. This deplorable result of the state church system was not accidental, but necessary. Experience proved that secular governments uniformly secured for themselves the virtual control of the churches they adopted and supported. The result of this arrangement was, that worldly men crowded into the church as authorised teachers of the gospel, who interpreted Christianity by their own practices and habits. The evil did not stop here. A state-endowed clergy, borne into their sacred office by the force of worldly motives, evinced an extreme jealousy of the instruction of the people by voluntary efforts for the religious instruction of the people: all Scriptural teaching but their own was denounced as unauthorised. Only those dissenters who lived in secluded spots, could estimate the terribly obstructive force which was exerted in opposition to all spiritual good which did not ally itself with the dominant church. The misrepresentation, the threats, the withdrawal of charitable relief, the ejection from tenancy, the refusal of employment, and the hundred modes of embittering the life of a poor peasant, which were brought to bear in beating down every manifestation of Christian truth which might seem to infringe upon the ascendancy of the parochial incumbent, if they could be fully known, would excite against the system the deepest indignation of every good and honest man. There was scarcely a village in the empire which had not its history of persecution and martyrdom, nor until the union between church and state were entirely abolished, was it possible that the gospel should have "free course" among our country population. To the same cause might be ascribed, in great measure, the rancour of sectarian feelings and impracticability of Christian union. The law of love, which would draw all hearts together, a state church abrogated. But a statement, however brief, of the multitudinous evils produced, more or less directly, by the system under review, would outrun all

reasonable limits. A few of the more prominent only had been mentioned. It might be mentioned, in addition, that revealed truth gained nothing, in point of authority, by being specially taken under the patronage of the state. On the contrary, its influence for good was practically impaired thereby. There was no surer means of making what was morally majestic in Christianity appear contemptible—what was lovely, odious—what was pure, disinterested, and spiritual, corrupt, self-seeking, and worldly——than putting it under the legislative patronage of civil rulers. Upon the sincerely religious of every denomination of Christians, whether within or without the pale of the establishment, the alliance between the church and the state operated most banefully. The atmosphere of the religious world would seem to have become stagnant in the immediate neighbourhood of the unholy system under review, and piety oppressed by its influence, had become sickly, and, to some considerable extent, inefficient. But if such, or anything approaching to such, had been the effect of the union between church and state upon the religious portion of society, how incalculably more deleterious had been its operation upon the ignorant, the unthinking, the careless, and the profane! Hence the fearful prevalence of infidelity amongst the poor. Whilst the system lasted, the bulk of our population would probably remain either the slaves of the grossest superstition, or the victims of a malignant infidelity. "Such," said the speaker in conclusion, "such is the practical working of the state church system as developed in these realms. Its whole history proves it to have been maintained for political purposes only. It is not in any sense a religious institution. It is not to be dealt with as such. It belongs to the world, and is subservient to worldly ends. It is the outward form of Christianity, made to answer the designs of a dominant aristocracy. Like all great delusions, it involves in its meshes a considerable number of good men—men whom charity would recognise as members of the church of Christ—whilst enlightened conscience denounces the ecclesiastical aggregation, of which they form but a small part, as no church at all. But the good in it which already exists, would survive the dissolution of the system, and would become all the more active and influential for their enfranchisement. The baneful results which it produces are its natural fruits; they can be only destroyed by destroying the source from which they spring. Whilst the world lasts, that which is conceived in error will grow up to mischief; and the policy which is radically unsound, no reformation can essentially change. There is but one way to protect society from its evils, and that way is to uproot it altogether."

The reading of the above document was frequently interrupted by loud applause.

Mr ECKETT moved that the paper now read by Mr Edward Miall be received, and placed on the records of the Conference.

Mr E. SWAIN seconded the resolution, which was adopted unanimously.

The Conference then adjourned until ten o'clock on the following morning.

SECOND DAY.—WEDNESDAY.

Morning Sitting.

On the motion of ST GEORGE D'ARCY IRVINE, Esq., seconded by Mr W. FORSTER, Dr YOUNG, of Perth, was called to the chair.

The CHAIRMAN, in opening the proceedings, said, that he felt more happy than he could express in words, when he looked back to the proceedings of yesterday, and the spirit that was then manifested. Every right-thinking man, in coming to the Conference, had felt a degree of anxiety [hear, hear]. There were signs already that God had come with them, and had been pleased to own and smile upon their efforts. British dissent required to reflect and consider, in order to be well apprised of its present position and its powers of action. He knew not any country in Christendom, during the whole past history of Christianity, where dissent occupied a position like that now occupied by British dissenters [cheers]. Their numbers were great, their intelligence was owned by all parties, their enterprise in the country had excited rivalship in every other class; their moral influence was great; he trusted their piety was exemplary; and if the great God had been pleased in his providence to make all those things combine, in the present condition of the dissenters of Britain, it was manifest that he had accumulated them upon them in order to summon them to action [cheers]. He could hardly allow himself to doubt that the present Conference was intended as a commencement to action, wisely, vigorously prosecuted, and tending to the ultimate success which they all desired. Brotherly kindness was a sweet, a pleasant, and a happy thing, and wherever it existed was produced by the sanctifying influence of the Spirit of God. It fared with individuals as with communities of men. If they experienced brotherly kindness the heart was purified, and if brotherly kindness were to disseminate itself among all classes of professing Christians in this country, there must be purity. First purity, then peace, was the law of Christianity [cheers]. While some might imagine that this Conference and subsequent meetings would have a tendency to interfere with the growth of benevolence among religious parties, he was of a different opinion. There could not be a sound ground of peace till the monster grievance was prostrated [cheers].

Mr SHOEBOTHAM then moved the following resolution:—

"1. That, in the judgment of this Conference, the union of the church with the state has been proved, by a long and varied course of experience, to be productive of highly injurious and deplorable results, both political and spiritual.

"2. That all historical evidence leads to the conclusion, that national establishments for securing the stated observance of divine ordinances and the promulgation of religious truth, are maintained chiefly for political purposes, are essentially secular rather than religious institutions, and merge the spiritual interests of men in the attempt to further the ends of civil rulers; that the endowment by the state of any class of clergy has never failed to render them the abettors of oppression; that state churches, wherever they exist, and under every variety of modification, tend to enhance the bitterness of political strife, to deepen feelings of alienation between class and class, and to infuse into the discussion of all leading topics of national policy, a spirit of intolerance and bigotry; that the claims which they set up and enforce, restrict in several ways the rights of citizenship, render just, impartial, and comprehensive legislation an impracticability, check the free action of political institutions, and clog the whole machinery of civil government; that they have seriously retarded the progress of popular education, and that they have thrown a seemingly religious sanction over the most unrighteous principles of state policy.

"3. That great as are the political evils resulting from the union of church and state, they sink into insignificance when compared with the injuries inflicted by it upon the spiritual interests of mankind: and this Conference avows its belief that Christianity has had to contend with no external and institutional impediment more formidable than state churches. The low, mistaken, and worldly views of the intrinsic power and the exalted objects of divine truth, which their very constitution exhibits, and the merely nominal or ritual character of the religion thereby produced—the system of patronage, whether lay or ecclesiastical, which is an inseparable element of their being, and the consequent assumption of the sacred offices by men utterly disqualified for the vocation of religious teachers—the temptations held out to a state clergy to maintain their exclusive pretensions by unscriptural and ridiculous theories respecting the sanctity of their order and the efficacy of rites when administered by themselves; to display active enmity against all voluntary effort for the diffusion of religious truth; to throw practical obstacles in the way of its success, and to resort to persecutions up to the extent allowed them by the spirit of the age—the influence they have ever exerted to prevent Christian union on any large, general, and scriptural basis—the fatal certainty with which they operate to detract from the spiritual authority of divine truth, and to give perpetuity to error, both in doctrine and in discipline—the veil which they throw over the religious destitutionof the people—the amount of benevolent and pious zeal which they thereby repress, and the popular infidelity, which these and other evils, flowing out of the system, combine to engender and to confirm, demonstrate the union between the church and the state to be the largest, the most specious, the most fatal obstacle to spiritual triumph, which Christianity in these realms has had to encounter.

The evils which were here so comprehensibly summed up, were embodied in resolutions referring to the able, clear, and comprehensive statement of them, which they had heard on the previous evening [cheers]. It was exceedingly refreshing to hear the tones of him whose productions had made their hearts throb with delight. There was a time when they, in the north, thought they were to have the battle entirely to themselves; but having felt the breezes of the south coming over to them, to inspire and invigorate them, they had now crossed the borders, to witness the scene of conflict in the metropolis of the empire [hear, hear]. The evils which these resolutions brought before them, presented a very solemn subject for consideration, and the question should come home to every one, what was their best way of seeking their removal. There were some who thought that these evils were so deeply rooted in the minds of men, so interwoven in the very structure of the social fabric, that it was utterly in vain to attempt their removal, and they excused their own indolence by saying that the tares and the wheat must grow together until the time of harvest [laughter]. There were others who told them that while the existence of these evils was undeniable, they could not be removed without the destruction of the social state. Now these views would have done to propound some two or three hundred years ago, when most reforms were accomplished by a considerable degree of violence. They, however, had lived to see the enunciation and the diffusion of another principle; that principle was moral force, and they considered that there was sufficient power in moral force, apart from all violence, to accomplish the separation of the church from the state [cheers]. He would ask their opponents whether the Hindooism of India was not deeply embedded in the national mind—whether it was not incorporated in the usages of society, and linked with the prejudices and passions of men [hear, hear]? Yet they sent forth missionaries with the expectation that Hindooism would be made to totter and to fall through their casting in the midst of it the beams of divine truth [hear]. Was not the same truth able to throw off the incubus which had been cast upon it by the national establishments of our own land [cheers]? They were said to be men given to change, men who belonged to the movement party. They denied not the charges. Change was the law of the universe; everything changed but Jehovah [hear, hear, and cheers]. The gospel had been sent into the world, in order to change men, and to lift them up from one condition to another. They objected not, then, to the changes which he had mentioned. It was impossible to contemplate the evils existing in society without considerable pain; yet their very existence afforded scope for the exercise of virtue in resisting them; it was one part of virtue to resist evil [cheers]. What was that Conference, but an assembly of men who had met together to overcome evil [hear, hear]? They had every reason for hope. When they looked at the history of the last three hundred years, what a change had taken place in society since that period! Christianity had asserted her supremacy amongst men. In old countries she had asserted a power which had previously been little known; in new countries she had obtained a lodgment for herself, and had moulded the habits, the principles, and the conduct of society. She was a match for every kind of opposition which had obstructed her progress, and they might feel assured that she would go forward in her bloodless but mighty career [cheers]. He then adverted to the progress made by the voluntary principle within the last ten years. In Scotland, he said, the battle was already won. There were none of the free church party (as we understood the speaker) who were now in favour of establishments, as they at present existed. There was, indeed, a kind of shadow of a shade of an establishment—a kind of Utopian thing—still existing in the minds of some; but they did not contend even for that, unless they were pushed to it. They said it was an establishment which was only to exist in the days of the millennium [laughter]. He concluded by expressing a hope that, after the experience which they had had of its working, they would always attach its full value to the voluntary principle [cheers].

Mr EDWARDS (of Nottingham) seconded the resolution.

Mr ALBRIGHT, of Birmingham, said:—There was one part of the document to which they had listened on the previous evening which, although of the utmost importance, had not been summed up in the resolution. He meant that part of it which referred to the influence of establishments in perpetuating and extending the system of war [loud cheers]. He begged to move, that after the word "bigotry" in the second paragraph, "that they," that is, establishments, "tend, in almost every known instance, to perpetuate the unchristian and inhuman system of war, by treating it in their creeds and standards as a Christian duty, and lending to it all the influence of ceremonial solemnities" [cheers].

Mr SHOEBOTHAM said, he felt absolutely ashamed that it had not occurred to himself to make this suggestion. He thought it was a reflection upon himself as a member of the Peace Society [hear, hear]. He most cordially moved the adoption of the words.

The resolution was passed in its amended form.

Mr MASSIE then read a paper to the meeting on state establishments of religion, considered in the several forms of their development in the British empire, of which the following is an abstract:—It commenced by referring to the opinions held by the Free church party in Scotland, who affirmed that while the civil magistrate should leave to the state her spiritual functions, it was incumbent on the state to secure to the members of the church the pre-eminent enjoyment of ordinances, and to the clerical functionaries the emoluments and dignities conventionally belonging to their office. He then showed the difference between this view and that of the covenanter, as represented by Richard Cameron. Some theoretical advocates of the establishment principle would have it applied only to that which was true in the judgment of the magistrate; some would mould it to the will and opinions of the majority; some regarded it as only the plastic creation of the legislature; and others as the immutable legacy of ancestral wisdom, hereditary obligation, and national compact. Magisterial authority and interference had practically been recognised and applied, in distinct and several forms, in almost every separate province of the British empire; episcopacy in England, presbytery in Scotland, both of them in Ireland, with an incipient approach to the endowment of popery. In Canada, and the other American and West India colonies, all the three had shared the patronage of the state; while methodism had also enjoyed her proportion of the Crown revenues, and Judaism had been treated with less contempt than in other regions. Colonial bishoprics had been instituted, and chaplaincies had been provided for in British India, in New South Wales, in the Southern Pacific, on the shores of China, and on the coasts of the Mediterranean, as well as at the capital of Palestine, under the auspices of the Crown and the enactments of the legislature. Presbytery, too, had sent out her branches in various directions. It would be a work of supererogation to give there an accurate analysis of the different systems separately. As a conference, they had no strife with episcopacy—no desire, in fact, for the extirpation of any system of church government, provided those who administered such things would remove the burden of supporting them from the national shoulders. Their controversy was with the principle which mapped out the country into parochial benefices, and diocesan and arch-diocesan episcopacies, with baronial immunities and prerogatives, with princely revenues and invidious powers, at the expense and to the detriment of the state, which exacted yearly tithe and festive duties, church rates, and grants from the Exchequer, appropriated glebe lands and lordly demesnes, cathedral structures and parochial edifices, provincial palaces and national universities, to the exclusive aggrandisement and for ministering to the ascendancy of twenty-eight episcopal lords and 8,000 beneficed priests, who yet were only the clergy of a sect, and the ministers of less than a moiety of the people. They could not admit the principle as just or wise which would invest them with such distinctions and powers, were their adherents nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand out of every million of the nation. Majorities with them did not serve to alter the principle, though numbers served to aggravate the illustration of its pernicious character. He then referred to many of the evils of establishments. He observed how little good had been effected by spiritual peers in their legislative capacity, and how they had held back with regard to the anti-slavery question, popular education, and many other public efforts of a beneficial nature. He adverted to the injustice done to dissenters in various ways, and particularly referred to burial grounds and marriages. He next referred to the development of the principles of religious establishments, seen in the history of Ireland, which had been governed for the special purposes of a dominant church, every interest being made subservient to her claims, and all national resources being made to minister to the aggrandisement of the ministers within her pale. The influence of churchmen, or their demands for paramount authority, had been the palpable hindrance to a government for the nation. He spoke of the disparity between the numbers of the Roman catholics and the members of the established church, as aggravating the evils connected with the Irish establishment. To attempt to depict the operation of the principle in Scotland, after the recent disruption, and the formation of what had been called the Free church, was superfluous. It had been plainly shown that there was not in the church of Scotland any spiritual independence, any popular control, or any security that the parochial assembly should be supplied with evangelical ministrations. Were they requested to show a country in which the principle of

a state church was more perilously placed than in any other, they would point to Scotland—to the diverse and active exertions of practical voluntaries, who were now severally carrying onward the cause of truth and religious freedom, if not by concentrated union, at least by the strenuous and conscientious maintenance and application of principle, in that land. The Free church of Scotland was the child of voluntaryism. Although the 550 ministers of the Free church party renounced the honour of being dissenters, as they understood the term, their being, their strength, and their prosperity, were to be traced to the advocacy and propagation of the great maxims of Christian independence. In the last place reference was made to the exhibition of the state authority in religion in the American colonies, the West Indies, British India, and Australia; and evils similar to those previously mentioned were shown to arise from state interference with religion.

Reference being made in the document to the unitarian body, as having appropriated to themselves chapels which were founded by trinitarians, Mr Hincks, a unitarian minister, present at the Conference, interrupted Mr Massie whilst reading the document, to complain of the passage containing the allusion in question, as offensive to himself and unitarians generally. It was agreed that Mr Massie should read the whole of the document to the meeting, who would then decide whether any part was liable to this objection. When the reading of the document had terminated, a discussion took place, which ended in Mr Massie's voluntarily striking out the passage which had given offence.

Mr Henry Taylor, of Melrose, then moved—

"That the paper now read by Mr Massie be received, and placed on the records of the Conference."

Mr Trestrail seconded the motion, which was at length agreed to, there being only one dissentient.

Mr Giles, of Leeds, moved the following resolutions on Mr Massie's paper:—

"That, upon a review of the various forms and degrees in which the principle of the union of the church with the state is acted out in the ecclesiastical arrangements of the British government, both in the United Kingdom and in the colonies and dependencies of the empire, this Conference is deeply impressed with the conviction, that, in the distribution of state honours and emolments among the professed ministers of religion, ministers of state and the legislature have rarely been influenced by any concern for the maintenance and propagation of religious truth, but generally by considerations of state policy.

"That this is seen most conspicuously in the church of England, as by law established, in which the distribution of ecclesiastical honours, offices, and emoluments is rendered subservient to the designs of men in power, and injurious to the best interests of the people.

"That, in Ireland, these evils are greatly aggravated by the protestant episcopal church in that country being the accepted church of only a very small minority of the population, and are further illustrated by the *regium donum* and the Maynooth grant, which, viewed in connexion, exhibit the government as pretending to sustain, with equal hand, protestant and Romanist dissenters, and the advocates of theological opinions diametrically opposed, while, in their distinct operation, they have conduced as little to the peace and good order of the country, as to the moral and religious benefit of the people.

"That, in Scotland, where the state, although it has established episcopacy in England, acknowledges the title of presbyterianism to legislative recognition and support, the political subjugation of an established church to the state by which it is established, has been recently demonstrated to be an inevitable and irreversible consequence and condition of such connexion and dependence, by the secession of nearly half the ministers of the state church in that country, simply because they could not retain their position in it, and yet preserve their independence as Christian men and Christian ministers.

"That in Canada, Australia, and other British colonies, government grants of money or of land to the ministers and members of conflicting denominations, evince in a striking manner the utter indifference of the public authorities to the nature of religious truth, and consequently sustain the inference that the distribution of such grants is regulated by merely political considerations.

"That the parliamentary grant to poor dissenting ministers in England and Wales, sustains the same conclusions.

"That, therefore, this Conference, on a solemn review of these facts, cannot refrain from entering its decided protest against all the forms in which the fundamental principle of the union of the church with the state has been embodied by the British legislature."

He commenced by saying, that he came from a sick bed to attend that Conference, and that so long as his heart continued to beat within him, it would be true to the great object they had in view that morning [cheers]. They were disposed in times of affliction to be true and honest to themselves, however forgetful they might be in times of health, and when surrrounded by all the bustle and glitter of the world. Now, he could safely say, that if upon his sick bed, amongst many causes of regret, there had been any one thing which had given him, in the review of his life, satisfaction, it was, that ever since he was called into public action, through evil report and good report, through sunshine and through shade, at home and abroad, he had been engaged, actively and untiringly, in the cause of liberty [cheers]. When those whom they were accustomed to regard as leaders in the ranks of dissent, and whom they were willing to acknowledge as leaders, if they would only lead them [a laugh]—when they came forward and uttered all sorts of prognostications about the steps which they were about to take—when they whispered in their ears the question, "Are you mad, that you are about to strengthen the enemy whom you wish to destroy? Will you introduce revolution, bloodshed, and conflagration into the empire?"—when persons of this description began to ask them such questions, their modesty rose up, and they set about inquiring whether their consciences and their judgments had not, after all, played them a trick [laughter]? Now, he had been led to look deeply into the motives which might actuate him, either to join that movement, or to keep at a distance from it, and he could safely say, that not a single motive had presented itself to his view, to keep him away from an engagement of that kind which he would not carry away to his dying bed, or to the judgment seat of Christ [hear, hear]. They had been told that they would not have the respectable dissenters with them, that they would have nothing but the scum of dissent. Well, now, if this were really an evil, how easily might it be remedied by the dignitaries walking into that room [laughter]. The only men who could remedy the evil refused to do it. If they had no respectability to bring, why, of course, they could not bring it [laughter]. The men who had respectability to bring, they were the men who were keeping it back in the great commercial towns of the empire, instead of coming there and exhibiting it before an admiring world [laughter]. Again, they were told that this was a wrong movement, because it was a movement for an abstract principle. They were right in theory, it was said; but then great men never acted upon abstract principles. Now he confessed that it was a rarity to see their great men acting upon abstract principles; he wished it was not a rarity [hear, hear]. But he must say that, in his judgment, they were bound by the abstract principles laid down in the New Testament. We read nothing about expediency there; and, indeed, when he applied to expediency-followers themselves for a definition of the term expediency, he found it impossible to drag out of them a distinct answer. If they followed this expediency, they found it to be just like the ghost of the King of Denmark—it was here, it was there, it was gone [great laughter]. Well, then, they had been told that if they came up to this Conference, they would have nothing but violence and clamour, almost realising the words—

"Pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,
Beat with fist instead of a stick."

[Great cheers.] Now, he would defy any assembly in that country to exceed them in the order of their proceedings. They would not yield even to the House of Commons itself [laughter]. Nay, to say nothing about the House of Commons, they would not degrade themselves by that comparison; let them go a little higher, let them go into the House of Lords, that region wherein everything polite was gathered; and taking even the House of Lord, with Lord Brougham and Lord Campbell to lead them, he defied them to set an example of more decorum, order, and quiet, than had been exhibited on that occasion [laughter and cheers]. Well, now, he thought the paper to which the resolution referred worthy of admiration. It spoke to the point. It spoke of wicked things, and it called them wicked things [laughter]. It called things by their right names, and his mother had always told him that it was a lie not to call things by their right names. Violence! Why, was there no violence but what was done by a popular assembly? Could there be no such thing as violence by law? Were there no violent things done legally in the present day [hear, hear]? Was it not a very violent thing to tithe the brown loaf and the potatoes of the poor, in order to furnish a bloated wealth for an overgrown hierarchy [cheers]? The gentlemen to whom he had before referred, saw no violence there. They could see no violence except in a popular assembly, which had met together for the purpose of promoting civil and religious liberty. Well, then, there was another grand objection to the Conference, namely, that that was not the time for such a movement. Why, he would like to know when the time would come. Let the objectors write it down, giving the day and the month, when the time would arrive. He had had a great deal to do with these writers upon time. He recollected that, when the whig ministry was in, they said—"The time is not come; our friends are in power, and you will turn them out if you take any step." Well, that ministry being out of power, what did they now say? "Why," said they, "the time is not come, because our enemies are in power." It appeared, therefore, that the time would never come until they had got a ministry which was perfectly neutral, which had no predilection in their favour on the one hand, and no prejudice against them on the other. He maintained, however, that the time was come; and that everything around them showed that it was come [cheers]. The time for duty had always arrived; they were not to wait for events before they sought to advance the everlasting kingdom of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ [hear]. But even if they were dependent upon time, he maintained that the signs of the times were all in their favour. Why, look at Ireland, had they not there the astonishing phenomenon of a Roman catholic priesthood washing their hands of state pay, saying, "We do not wish to have a farthing of public money?" How long would they keep them in that humour [hear, hear]? Let them take them at their word; and if they could find a pit deep enough to bury ecclesiastical revenues, so that they should never come up again, let them toss them into it [cheers]. They need not be at a loss for such a pit. There was the national debt [hear, hear]. It would do them all good to get rid of a little taxation. Small as was his own share of the income tax, he would be glad to be relieved from it [laughter]. It would be a day joyful for them all, when they could induce the Irish priesthood to give up all their claims to ecclesiastical revenues [cheers]. Let them seek to attain this object, while Mr O'Connell was yet alive [hear, hear]. Again, looking to Scotland, he contended that the time was come there. Did not the Free church party tell them that they had found it utterly impossible to continue in connexion with the established church consistently with their homage to Christ, as the head of that church? Let them take them at their word, and put to them the question, whether, if Christ were the King of the church, he was not also lord of its revenues? He thought there was a seasonable opportunity to give them a word upon that point. Well, then, he held that the time was come in England. They found one party ranged against another; and why? Simply because the great principles which they advocated were not understood and adopted. For all these reasons, then, he maintained that the time was come for active and zealous exertion [cheers]. Perhaps it might be said that he was forgetting the resolution. Well, now, what did it say? The resolution said that "state patronage for ecclesiastical purposes had seldom been bestowed for religious objects." Well, now, that at least was not a violent expression; they might have said "never bestowed," but they would lose nothing by using gentle expressions in their resolutions [hear, hear]. Was not this statement true? They could not, he thought, doubt its truth after hearing the paper of Dr Wardlaw; but if they did, he called upon them to remember a little pamphlet, written by that godly man and son of the church, Archdeacon Bathurst. What did this godly man say? Why, he said, that his father was most scandalously used by the whigs. He said, it was well known that all parties took care of those who stood by them. Well, now his father was the Bishop of Norwich, and the only person who stood by the whigs on the catholic emancipation question and the repeal of the test and corporation acts. "Now," said he, "how did they use my father? Why, they used him so scandalously, that they only gave him this paltry bishopric, and the poor man actually died without leaving more than £30,000 behind him [laughter]—and then here am I, his eldest son, and I never had more than £1,200 a year in my life, while my brother lost his reason because he never had more than £400 or £500 a year." He asked whether this did not give an insight into the godly motives which regulated the bestowment of church patronage [hear, hear]? This gentleman said, "The other party did not act in this way; the Bloomfields and the Sumners had not been so treated by their party." It was impossible to resist the conclusion to which this naturally led. Well, then, look at Ireland; a vast sum of money was given to the established church to teach protestantism, while a grant was given to Maynooth to train up young men to teach popery. Well, then, grants were given to the trinitarians to teach trinitarianism, and grants were given to the unitarians to teach unitarianism. Now which of these systems was right? Was there any intimation at all as to the manner in which these grants were to be applied in the several cases which he had mentioned? Then turn to the colonies. There they had grants given to episcopacy, to presbyterianism, and to Wesleyanism [hear, hear, hear]. Now what did all this show, except that religious principles had nothing whatever to do with the matter [hear, hear]? Now, in conclusion, he begged to make one or two suggestions, as to the mode in which they might carry out their object. There was very much, he apprehended, which they might do as individuals, even without any organisation whatever. For instance: very much of the support and the honour of the hierarchy depended on their titles. Well, now, he would recommend taking a leaf out of their friend Mr Sturge's book, that they should have done with ecclesiastical titles altogether. And, in order to this, let them begin with themselves. Let them as pleqeian ministers, give up that little ecclesiastical prefix, as John Foster used to call it, but, as he called it, that little bit of a rag of popery, "Reverend" [cheers]. "There," said the worthy speaker, "is my reverend—will you have it" [great laughter]? Then he hoped some of those who belonged to the aristocracy of dissent, would give up their bumping D.D.'s [cheers, and cries of "Question"]. He merely threw this out as a suggestion: of course his friends could do as they liked about taking it [hear, hear]. There had been some talk on this subject lately in the House of Commons. It was said that the titles of the popish clergy ought to be allowed and sanctioned by law. Why, there was no knowing what titles they might soon have to mouth, in order to comply with the usages of society. If they began with giving up their own titles, they might more consistently act in this matter [hear, hear]. Well, then, there was another point relating to office, to which he desired also to advert. He knew not whether there were any dissenting magistrates there; but this he did know, that amongst his acquaintances he had scarcely known a single dissenting magistrate who had taken that abominable oath that was attached to his office, who had remained worth a rush to the cause of dissent. This was a point which deserved grave consideration [hear, hear]. Now, having made these remarks, he would exhort their friends to stand firm, and to remember that they had not done all by coming to that conference [hear, hear]. That was only the beginning, not the end. That was a day of sunshine; but so formidable were they in that assembly, that he believed they would meet with something very different from sunshine [hear]. A time of affliction was before them. Did not the Bishop of Exeter tell them the other day, that there was a law in existence forbidding men to call themselves members of any church except the church of England [hear, hear]? Were not their enemies converting peaceable men into conspirators? Did they not tell men at Norwich, that they should not sit at home and remain neutral in the struggle which was going forward [hear, hear]? Did they not disavow all intention of giving up those inquisitorial dens into which they dragged dissenters, holding them in the clutches of an ecclesiastical gripe [hear, hear]? Why they had got all the instruments of torture ready. Their knives were already whetted; and as soon as public opinion would allow, they might rely upon it that they would select their victims from amongst them. But, whatever happened to them, there was one delightful consideration, and it was this. Though they might suffer, He whom they served was never to suffer again! He had endured all that he had to endure for the human race. He believed that when they saw Him it would be in glory and in majesty,

and that the very next scene that would open upon the world would not close without exhibiting Him to the eyes of his admiring people, crowned with many crowns, and having on his vesture and his thigh a name written, "King of kings and Lord of lords."

Mr KING, of Cork, seconded the resolution. In doing so, he made an interesting statement as to the feeling existing amongst different classes of persons in Ireland, and referred to the voluntary principle and state support of religion. In Ireland they had their religious differences; but they were learning to settle them by the power of reason and argument, and by an appeal to the word of God. He referred to the antipathy of the Roman catholic population to the established church in Ireland. He also detailed to the meeting circumstances which had led him to write three letters to the *Nation* newspaper, on the subject of civil and religious liberty; one to the members of the established church; a second to the Roman catholics, and the last to the Protestant dissenters in that country. This paper was the organ of the Roman catholics in Ireland, and one of the editors, who was also one of the traversers, had written to him to express his approval of the sentiments which he had advocated on this subject. He then referred, at some length, to the practical working of the established system in Ireland, contending that it was injurious to the cause of religion. He concluded by saying, that the great bulk of the population of Ireland were Roman catholics; a very small proportion were protestants, and a still smaller held the great principles of civil and religious liberty. It was, therefore, incumbent upon all in Ireland who recognised these principles, to do all in their power to recommend and diffuse them. If they could induce Roman catholics to adopt and carry out these principles, the result would be beneficial, not only to that country, but, through them, to other countries which professed the Roman catholic religion. The emancipation which they sought was especially indispensable to make Ireland "great, glorious, and free."

Mr HINCKS moved, "That the meeting be adjourned until five o'clock."

Mr CROW, of Worcester, having seconded the resolution, it was carried unanimously.

Evening Sitting.

On the motion of GEORGE THOMPSON, Esq., seconded by Mr ROE, of Birmingham, Mr J. ACKWORTH took the chair.

The CHAIRMAN, in opening the meeting, said, that it appeared, from what had been intimated by one and another of the speakers during their former sitting, that a suspicion existed abroad that the delegates were unable to conduct themselves on this most interesting occasion either as gentlemen or as Christians [laughter]. He thought that they might refer to the past for a complete refutation of that surmise [hear, hear]. He would not detain the meeting by any observations, but merely solicit their sympathy and support in discharging the duties of the office to which he had been called.

Mr KENNEDY, of Aberdeen, then read a series of alterations in the resolutions before them, and which alterations had been suggested by the business committee, and acceded to by the mover and seconder.

We have given the resolutions as they were ultimately carried.

Mr A. GORDON, of Derry, said that he would confine his remarks entirely to one subject—that of the Irish *regium donum*. Previous to leaving Ireland, with his brother delegate, for this great metropolis, he met a committee of their constituents, and the last instructions which they gave to them were, to try to use their influence with the nonconformists of England, and urge them to shake themselves loose from that paltry, polluting thing, the English *regium donum*. It was constantly thrown in their teeth, in Ireland, that the nonconformists of England were the distributors of the *regium donum*, and that some of their most influential ministers were connected with it. A circumstance occurred at the commencement of this Conference, that gladdened his heart. All honour to Dr Cox [cheers]. He believed that the *regium donum* was a political device. It had pinioned the arm of noble-spirited men, and, were it not for its paralysing influence, he believed that there would have been present at this Conference a noble batch of men from the presbyterian church of Ireland [cheers]. But for the *regium donum*, the monster of iniquity, the episcopalian establishment in Ireland, could not for so long a time have extended its iron arms into every corner of the land, and gathered into its voracious stomach the tenth part of the poor man's viands [loud cheers]. What had been the effect of the *regium donum* on the Irish Secession church? They had taken money, and had done as they were bid—they had cooled down into a position of formality, until they were in a condition to coalesce with a body of men who rejoiced in recognising the rotten Erastian Church of Scotland as their venerable mother. There was one man who, for more than half a century, had "braved the battle and the breeze." He alluded to the Rev. J. Reid, who had rejected the *regium donum*, and continued to do so still, and God had prospered him. Thus much for the fact. They that honoured the Lord he would honour. That Christianity was not able to maintain its ground, was a sentiment that should never come from the mouth of a Christian; it was alike derogatory to the church and dishonouring to the church's Head. They were anxious to effect the freedom of the Irish endowed presbyterians. Many of them were men of great talent and energy. They said that they were free; but did any one believe them [hear]? It was impossible that they should be free in their present position. If they were in any case to resist or remonstrate with the legislature, Graham would say to them, "You are bound by your very callings to be patterns of obedience." He wished to see Irish liberality brought into play; but to that the established church, with its accompaniments, formed the great barrier. They had every confidence in the final triumph of their principles, but they wanted the assistance of the nonconformists of England. With this they would go on rejoicing, feeling assured that the children, at least, of their opponents would bless the men who had laboured, through good report and through evil report, amidst the shafts of ridicule and the malice of the enemy, in achieving for the world the freedom of the Christian church.

Mr TRESTRAIL, of Cork, said he came forward to say a few words about Ireland. It had been his privilege to co-operate with Mr King in carrying out the voluntary principle in that country. He had always found great difficulty in getting the nonconformists of that country to act up to their own principles [hear, hear]. One of the most obvious and mischievous results of the established system in Ireland was, that it had caused almost the whole Roman Catholic population to regard every Protestant as an oppressor. When he had said that he was against the established church, he had generally found himself regarded with the greatest astonishment. He believed that nearly all the confusion at present existing in Ireland arose out of the established church. The social disorganisation of Ireland—the alienation of feeling between persons of different sects and parties, must all be traced up to the system of coercive establishments; and till that system were put an end to, these disorders could never be brought to a termination. If the establishment were done away, the whole system of legislation would be altered. With respect to the proposal to pay the Roman Catholic priesthood, he was not at all convinced, in his own mind, that they were not willing to receive state pay; but the people formed a check upon them. On this subject great intelligence existed amongst the Irish peasantry. The speaker here mentioned one or two anecdotes, tending to show that the lower orders of the Irish Roman Catholics were opposed to the endowment of the priesthood by the state. In a conversation which he had with Father Mathew on this subject, some time since, the latter said to him, "I should very much like to know what are the general feelings of the body with whom you stand connected. Do you not know, that, without a single exception in all history, whenever church and state have been connected together, either the state has corrupted the church, or the church has overturned the state?" He assured him that that was the opinion of all his brethren; when Father Mathew remarked, "Sir, if you Protestants, when you came over to Ireland, instead of putting your trust in acts of parliament, had relied upon truth itself, and upon that God whose truth you profess to declare, our relative position, and our relative numbers, and the whole social and moral position of Ireland, would have been the very reverse of what we now witness" [hear, hear]. He thanked the meeting for the attention with which they had listened to these desultory observations.

Mr J. GREEN, of Leicester, submitted to the chairman, whether they had up to that time proceeded in the best way for the object of the Conference. Hitherto they had only announced principles. He apprehended that the object of the Conference was of a more practical nature. Though he valued the papers read, and the speeches delivered, perhaps as highly as any one, he did not come from Leicester to listen to them, but to go to work [hear, hear].

A discussion then took place in reference to the remarks of Mr Giles, respecting municipal officers; but on its being stated that the subject was embraced in the next resolution, the discussion was postponed.

The resolution before the meeting was then put, and carried unanimously.

Mr HARE then read a paper forwarded to the Conference by a member of the bar, of which the following is an abbreviation:—

The writer commenced by stating that it was often objected that the union of church and state was but an abstraction, and incapable of being accurately traced or defined. The link which connected the two elements might always be infallibly tested by the inquiry, whether, on the one hand or on the other, the allurements of honour, power, and wealth, were being employed by the state in favour of the profession of religious belief? for if, in either respect, the answer were in the affirmative, the union of church and state existed. Such union existed even when the smallest portion of either kind of influence was employed by the state. The state might, at one and the same time, be in union with two churches, and yet might favour one more than the other; the difference in the two cases was one only of degree. A perfect equality in the distribution of state support and honours among the various sects of the Christian faith, would be but evidence of an equal union with each, and could not obviate the objection to the interference of the civil magistrate in matters of religious faith and practice. In accordance with these principles, the union of church and state within Great Britain and its colonies, would therefore appear to be constituted.

1. By such laws or usages, as require either the profession or the disclaimer of any form of religious faith or worship, as a necessary qualification for the succession to, or enjoyment of, any office in the state, or any place of profit or honour in the public service, or which impose, as a qualification for the exercise of any public office or employment, the making and subscribing of any declaration of belief, or any pledge of conduct or intentions in reference to the established church.

The requirement of the profession of a particular faith by the monarch, and of a disclaimer, by the possessors of certain high offices, of articles of religious belief—and the declaration required to be subscribed in lieu of receiving the Lord's Supper, as a qualification for offices and employments—exemplify the form of the union of church and state.

2. By such laws or usages as confer on any ministers of religion, as such, the right to fill any parliamentary function or public office, or to exercise any public duty.

The right to sit in the House of Lords, as enjoyed by the bishops of the episcopal church—the right to exercise the jurisdiction of the so-called ecclesiastical courts, by the same parties, or their nominees—the exclusive privileges conferred by law on the ministers of the same church, in reference to the burial of the dead in places provided at the public cost, and to the solemnisation of marriages (as by ecclesiastical license), without the sanctions and restraints otherwise imposed—the appointment of such persons only to tutorial offices in colleges and schools supported out of public property—all these are incident to the union of church and state.

3. By such laws or usages as, on occasions of state ceremony, exclude all ministers of religion, except those of a particular faith, from the celebration of religious services, or from conducting religious worship before national bodies and institutions.

The religious sanctions to the solemn compact between the monarch and the nation entered into at the ceremony of coronation, being administered by the ministers of a particular faith—the two Houses of Parliament restricting themselves, in the employment of chaplains, to the ministers of a particular church—a similar limitation of the right to conduct public worship in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and in prisons and workhouses—and the appointment of episcopal chaplains in the army and navy—these are instances in which the church is united to the state.

4. By such laws or usages as authorise the levying of any public tax or exaction on person or property, or as involve the grant of monies out of the parliamentary taxes or any public revenues, for the support of any form of religious faith or worship.

The exaction of tithes for the use of ministers of religion—the imposition of church rates, Easter dues, and the like—the various annual votes of money, by parliament, to the ministers of the episcopal church, both at home and in the colonies—to universities, from which, or from the ultimate advantages of which, all dissenters are excluded, and to the Roman Catholic college in Ireland—the appropriation of money taken out of colonial revenues to the use of episcopal clergymen, and also to that of ministers of the Scotch church, Roman catholics, and others—the salaries paid to chaplains in the army and navy, embraced in the annual estimates for these departments, and to chaplains in workhouses and prisons, provided for by parochial and county rates—the annual parliamentary votes for the *regium donum* in Ireland, and for the relief of poor dissenting ministers in England—all these form golden links of union between church and state.

5. By such laws as secure possession of any lands, buildings, or other property, at any time surrendered by the crown, or by parliament, for the sole use of bodies of men professing a specified form of religious belief.

The appropriation of the revenues arising from large masses of public property, commonly called bishops' lands, and from similar property given in lieu of tithes, to the payment of the bishops and ministers of the episcopal church—the appropriation of cathedrals, churches, parsonage-houses, and glebes, and of the colleges, buildings, and lands connected with the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, to the exclusive use of the ministers and members of the episcopal church—the appropriation of lands in the British colonies to the exclusive use of the episcopal church, the church of Scotland, the Roman catholics, and other sects of Christians, respectively—these, also, are costly evidences of the union of church and state.

6. By such laws or usages as, on the ground of religious belief, create distinctions of any kind, honourable, invidious, or otherwise, among the subjects of this realm; or as, on the same ground, confer exemptions from any payments required by law.

The laws which prevent persons in official stations from appearing with the insignia of their offices when attending public worship, unless such worship be that of the episcopal church—and the allowance of drawbacks of duties payable on building materials, when used in the erection of places of worship connected with the episcopal church—afford evidence of the union of church and state.

Such, then, are the laws and usages, in the operation of which the union of church and state is practically exhibited. The separation of church and state must, consequently, involve—

1st, The repeal of all those laws which make the profession or disclaimer of any form of religious belief, or the subscribing of any declaration containing a pledge of a certain line of conduct towards any religious body, a necessary qualification for the exercise of any public office or employment; or which confer on the ministers of any form of religion, as such, the right to fill any parliamentary station or public office, or to exercise any public duty; or which permit none but the ministers of a particular faith to conduct the services of religion on occasions of state ceremonies, and before the two houses of parliament and other national bodies and institutions; or which devote money taken out of the parliamentary taxes, or out of any branch of public revenue, or any public lands, public buildings, or other public property, to the sustentation of any form of religious worship; or which confer exemptions from public payments, or create distinctions of any nature, honourable or otherwise, founded on the profession of any form of religious belief.

2ndly, The enactment of laws for the entire abolition of public exactions in support of any form of religious faith, and for the resumption by parliament (having regard to the life interests of present possessors, and to the equitable claims of all other parties), and the application to strictly national purposes of all lands, buildings, and other property, at any time given by the crown or by parliament, for the sustentation of any form of religious worship, or for the exclusive use of bodies of men professing a specified form of religious belief.

Mr HENRY ANGUS, of Aberdeen, briefly moved the adoption of the above paper; congratulating the meeting in having legal aid in times when such ticklish meanings were put on the term "conspiracy" [a laugh].

Mr J. SIBREE of Coventry, in rising to second the resolution, said, I sincerely rejoice that I have lived to see this day, and to attend a public meeting held in the heart of this great metropolis, the object of which is the separation of the church from the state. I have been thinking, since I have been in this room, that there is a propriety in our meeting in such a place. This is the Crown and Anchor; and we are

met, as our Scotch friends express it, to assert the *crown* rights of the Redeemer, while the *anchor* of hope shall be depicted on our banners, indicative of the feelings we cherish that the object of our meeting shall be accomplished. If anything has diminished the pleasure I have felt on this occasion, it has been the absence of so many of our esteemed and respected brethren, in London and the country, whom we might have expected to be present. But they will come in when they understand the subject more correctly; and the sooner they come the better for them, for us, and the cause. I am quite sure it will be much easier for them to come promptly; for

"The longer wisdom they despise,
The harder is she to be won."

It has been objected against this movement that it did not originate with what are called the respectable portion of the dissenting body; but I am reminded of what Horace Walpole once remarked, that "the movement of public bodies is like the movement of a fish—the tail pushes on the head." I trust the day is not far distant when we shall be favoured with the support and co-operation of the whole of our periodical press; when we shall not only have *Nonconformist* support, and *Patriotic* influence, and the testimony of a *Christian Witness*, but a little *Evangelical* light, and a little *Congregational* consistency, and that a *Baptist* flood will bear us up, and float us onwards upon the ocean of truth and liberty. Thus, I trust, we shall form "a threefold cord that cannot be broken," at the end of which we will form a noose, and throw it around the neck of that golden image which Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up; and with a long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull altogether, we shall bring that idol to the ground; while, from one end of the earth to the other, the shout shall be heard, "Babylon the great is fallen! Babylon is fallen!"

The resolution was then carried unanimously.

Mr John Burnett then proposed the following resolution, grounded on the paper which had just been read:—

"That, in contending for the separation of the church from the state, this Conference contemplates an ultimate appeal to the imperial parliament for the following objects:—First. For the repeal of all those laws which render either the profession or the disavowal of any form of religious faith or worship, or the subscription, or recital, or adoption in any way, of any declaration containing or implying a pledge of a certain line of conduct towards any religious body or institution, a necessary qualification for the exercise of any public office or employment; or which confer on the ministers of religion, in any of its forms, the right, as such, to fill any parliamentary station or public office, or to perform any public or state function; or which exclude all ministers of religion, except those attached to a specified sect, from conducting services of religion on occasions of state ceremony, and before either of the two Houses of parliament and other national bodies or institutions, or which devote public money, whether taken out of the parliamentary taxes or out of any other branch of the national revenue, or public property, whether consisting of lands, buildings, or otherwise, to the support of any form of religious faith or worship; or which, on the ground of religious faith or worship, exempt from public payments, or create distinctions of any nature, honourable or otherwise.

"Secondly. For the enactment of laws entirely abolishing public exactions in support of any form of religious faith or worship, and resuming into the hands of parliament (with due regard to the life interests of actual beneficiaries, and to the equitable claims of all other parties) for application to purposes strictly national and purely secular, all lands, buildings, and other property, at any time granted by parliament for the support of religious faith or worship in any form, or for the exclusive use of men or bodies of men, professing or maintaining any description of religious faith or worship."

Before he referred to the resolution, he must observe, in reference to some remarks which had already been made, that there appeared to him to be a mistake as to what was really meant by business done in the Conference [hear, hear]. Some gentlemen said that no business was done till action was begun. He thought that was a mistake. Let it be remembered that that conference was the first ever assembled within that kingdom for the express purpose of directing its sole and exclusive attention, not to theological differences, but to the connexion between the church and the state [hear]. Now, if such were the fact, it was quite necessary that they should clearly state their principles as dissenters [hear]. The papers which had been read would be a guide to the future historian when he asked what they had been about—he would thus understand on what ground they asked for the separation. Gentlemen must not suppose that they were doing nothing unless they were running down the Strand with a petition to be presented to the House of Commons [laughter]. He was not surprised, however, at the uneasiness manifested; for the feeling was instinctively associated with national establishments [laughter]. Now, the resolution he had to propose was connected, perhaps, with one of the most delicate points which the Conference could possibly have to consider. This resolution brought them to deal with the law; it brought them to deal with the constitution; it brought them to deal with the magistracy; it brought them to deal with the Commons; it brought them to deal with the Lords; it brought them to deal with the Queen; and it would be well for them if it did not bring them to deal with the Attorney-general [laughter]. There would be something doing when he interfered [laughter]. But it might be said that the laws of the country were all against them. And it would be naturally asked, what they were to do with those laws [hear, hear]. Their friend, Mr Sturge, had told them that it was possible to get on without the declaration—but he (Mr Burnett) very much doubted whether it was possible to stay in without it. At all events, it could not be done without exposure to a great deal of unpleasantness [hear, hear]. Whether it were a legal thing to enter a council without a declaration or not, it was their duty to seek that there should be no longer any doubt about the matter [hear, hear]. A councillor should be known to be an honest man, and there was a pettifogging annoyance in these declarations which was unworthy of the dignity of the legislature. The question was, whether a man was honest, but, though there could be no doubt of that, he was required to say, that he would not injure the established church. What had that to do with the lighting and paving of Birmingham, or with the corporation accounts [hear, hear]? It was a farce to say, that the object of the declaration was to ascertain a man's honesty; the only purpose was to extort from him homage to the established church [cheers]. The same remark would apply to all the titles and all the dignities connected with the established church. Why give ecclesiastics such lordly titles? If it were done to procure respect, he could understand it. A man had not respect from other attributes, and therefore he must have a title [laughter]. It was a burlesque on titles; a burlesque on respectability; and, above all, it was a burlesque on religion [hear, hear]. He then referred to the oath required from Roman catholic members of the House of Commons, and described it as utterly unmeaning. A learned prelate, when speaking of subscription to the thirty-nine articles, said, it was not understood that young lads, when they enter the universities, believed what they subscribed. Let the same doctrine be applied to the Roman catholics; or rather, let the law requiring subscription be repealed. But then it was asked, what they were to do with the coronation oath of the Queen? The coronation oath was a part of the formula through which the sovereigns of this country had been accustomed to pass when they received the crown and sceptre of this realm. But what did this oath mean? Did it mean that no change should ever take place in the laws of the church? Why, changes were taking place every day; and, in the very face of the coronation oath, they had struck down at one blow ten bishoprics of the church of Ireland. The King had sworn that he would maintain the established church in all its privileges. Were ten bishoprics no privilege [laughter]? How could they decimate the episcopacy in this way and yet save the oath [laughter]? He then went into an historical review of the manner in which sovereigns and the legislature of this country had dealt with the established church from the reign of Henry VIII. down to the present time, to which it would be impossible to do justice in our present limits; his object being to show, that throughout the coronation oath had not prevented interference with the affairs of the church. They were told that they could not carry their principles into effect without being guilty of spoliation. He might refer to the precedent of Henry the VIII., but the was told that it could not apply, for that the act was unquotable now, as their plan was not like Henry's. The resolution provided for all the existing incumbents, and, of course, their heirs could not be sufferers. Before he concluded, he would just observe, that, whilst they were not to be intimidated by the lack of precedents, neither were they to be intimidated by any of their friends holding back [hear, hear]. Many of them said, that the time for action was not come; that they were arguing for an abstract theory. If they had their hearty assent, they could soon get over the difficulty of time. The time was already come to upset the system [cheers]. Let them go on with diligence in this cause; let them show churchmen a list of those who were pledged to it; and having both absent and present friends with them, and no precedents of parliaments and courts against them, the cause must prosper [cheers].

Mr Brock, of Norwich, in seconding the resolution, said he had the honour of standing before them as the representative of 20,000 members of baptist churches, and 35,000 members of congregations, in the West Indies, who had forwarded to him resolutions which they had adopted on this subject. The letter containing them was dated, "Stewart-town, Jamaica, 23rd November, 1843." Mr Brock then read the following:—

"At a meeting of the Baptist Union, held at Falmouth on the 8th and 9th of November, 1843, a discussion took place relative to the anticipated Convention of dissenters in England, and the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:—

"'1. That we hail with delight the proposal to hold a Convention of all denominations, to devise means for the separation of the church from the state.

"'2. That, as the evils of a state-church are not confined to the parent country, we would suggest to the respected leaders of this movement, the propriety of delegates being admitted, not only from all parts of the United Kingdom, but from the British colonies and other dependencies throughout the world.

"'3. That, should such an alteration be made in the proposed constitution of the Convention, we appoint our brethren, the Rev. Joseph Augus, of London, and the Rev. William Brock, of Norwich, as the representatives of this Union.

"'4. That the secretary be instructed to write to the Editor of the *Nonconformist* on the subject, furnishing him with the foregoing resolutions, and requesting him to lay them before any committee of management, which may meet to fix the forms and constitution of the Convention.

"'5. That the secretary also write to our esteemed brethren, Augus and Brock, respectfully requesting them to accept the appointment made, and to act in the Convention on our behalf.'"

Then, by way of giving him some material for his speech, the following statement was added to the resolutions:—

"I doubt not, my dear brother, that you have heard before now of the existence, in this island, of such a body as the Baptist Western Union, but perhaps your knowledge of it may not be such as to preclude the necessity of my giving you a little information on the subject. The Union, then, is at present composed of twenty ministers and their churches, which contain more than 20,000 members, with congregations of at least 35,000. These, as you are aware, support their own ministers and schools, and as they have almost all recently emerged from a state of slavery, and have, consequently to contend with the various difficulties attendant upon settling in life, they deeply feel, and loudly complain, respecting the burdens which have been imposed upon them by a state church. It may be thought in England that those burdens are but light. To give something like a just notion of them, I would state that the sum annually allowed for church purposes, by the clergy law, which will not expire till 1847, is £28,060. sterling, while the parochial parliaments or vestries are at liberty to assess the communities which they are said to represent, to any amount which they may think necessary for this purpose. In the parish of Trelawney, for instance, from which I write, the vestry grants to the establishment have, during the last four years, varied from £8,000 to £2,000 per annum. Supposing that the last-mentioned amount be looked upon as the future minimum, and that all the other parishes in the island give, by their vestries, in the same proportion, here will be a sum of between £40,000 and £50,000 per annum to be added to the above-mentioned clergy-law grant of £28,060. There would thus be an aggregate sum of not less than £70,000 sterling to be raised by 400,000 inhabitants, at least three-fourths of whom are dissenters. Nor can we, as in England, refuse to pay these church-rates, they being so mixed up with the public or Queen's taxes, that in objecting to the one we must necessarily object to the other, and thus expose ourselves to the charge of disaffection to the government.

"We are not idle in the matter, but have begun to petition the assembly to make no more grants for religious purposes."

The coloured population of Jamaica were helping themselves; they were sending their own people into the vestries, and they hoped soon to send them to the Colonial assembly, and when there they would be of the greatest service in assisting the common cause. He was glad that they were to have an official document, stating what it was that the Conference really meant. He would ask, in the first place, what it was they did not mean? Adopting the old fashioned nonconformist plan, he would take up the subject negatively. They did not mean to give up their efforts for the evangelisation of the conntry. Had it not been for the advocates of the present measure, he knew not whether evangelical instruction could have been imparted in this country. Some people said, that if they dissolved the establishment they would destroy religion in the country. He would ask where religion was now, so far as the efforts of the establishment had tended to keep it alive? It was not their intention to pull down churches: he hoped to live to preach in them [laughter]. Let the cathedrals stand; he admired them, if it were only for their splendid architecture. He would not lay his hands on one of them, because he thought they might hereafter be devoted to far better purposes than they had hitherto been. They did not mean to interfere with episcopacy, or with episcopal investments. In another place he should be prepared to show that episcopacy was quite as schismatic as congregationalism; but that was a question with which this Conference had nothing to do [hear, hear]. They did not mean to take into their hands any one almshouse, or chapel, or church, which the episcopalians had built with their own money. But he would state what they did mean. They meant to attempt the entire and everlasting annihilation of patronage in the church, whether it were diocesan or parochial [cheers]. When a bishop died it was supposed to be one of the greatest windfalls that could come into the possession of a government [hear]. The man who was the most strenuous adherent to the government, was the one selected to succeed him, and that without the slightest regard to the clergy over whom he is to preside. A permission was sent to the dean and chapter to elect him. They met in solemn conclave; they implored God's blessing to direct them in the choice, while at the same time the very document which convened them was endorsed with the name of the man whom they were bound to elect [hear, hear]. Then as to parochial patronage, out of 12,000 parishes there were only 70 in which the choice of the minister was in the hands of the people [hear, hear]. Ought it not to be a matter of lamentation that livings were sold and bartered, and, if report did not speak falsely, even gambled for [hear, hear]? It was the intention of the Conference to effect the entire annihilation of the ecclesiastical supremacy of the crown. "The king," it was said, may execute all manner of jurisdictions, privileges, and pre-eminences, in any wise touching or concerning any spiritual or ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and he may visit, reform, redress, order, correct, and amend all abuses, contempts, and enormities whatsoever." That was the actual law of the case at this moment, and they were desirous of having it repealed. Some people said that it was never acted upon, but he would tell them a different story. A clergyman in St Giles'-in-the-Fields, not 150 years ago, preached a sermon on a certain subject which came to the ears of his Majesty. His Majesty was offended, sent for the bishop, and ordered him to suspend him. The bishop inquired who the King was; and refused, and so far he was a good nonconformist. The King forthwith suspended the bishop [laughter and cheers]. Elizabeth had suspended the Bishop of Oxford for twenty-two years. If she had power to suspend him for that period, she could have kept Oxford without a bishop till now [cheers]. Charles the First brought Bishop Davenant on his knees to ask forgiveness for having preached a sermon on predestination [hear, hear]. He (Mr B.) would like to know which of the bishops before him could be brought to bow before Majesty for anything they said [cheers]? It was too bad that religion should be thus trammeled hand and foot. They wanted to get the Act of Uniformity repealed, and the sooner it was done the better. They wished to have the ecclesiastical courts rooted up [immense cheers]. He believed that he was in some danger of going there. There were some men present who had been sent to prison in consequence of their dissenting principles. All honour to every such man [cheers]. Under these circumstances they thought it best to attack the "monster" grievance—the connexion between church and state. They wanted all the property taken by Henry the Eighth to be taken back, and apportioned to state purposes. Some persons said that this question would involve

points of great difficulty. To be sure it did. Who ever did a great thing without finding that it was surrounded with difficulties [loud cheers]? Let the titles come back into the hands of the state [cheers]. That was a practical question. Let the church lands follow the same course, and let it be done according to the united wisdom of parliament; let it be done, and religion would no longer be fettered, desecrated, and degraded. The question they were now discussing was not one of paltry ephemeral sectarianism. The man who said that did not understand it. It was a question which affected the welfare of the realm, and the prosperity of the church of Christ. They would meet to-morrow to form an organisation, and then let them go home and carry it out—let them gird up the loins of their minds, and quit themselves like men [cheers]. The signs of the times looked darkly on all establishments—a ban seemed to be placed upon them. Their doom was fixed. He heard a voice saying to him, "What is your petition and what is your request?" To which he replied, "His heart's desire and prayer to God was, 'Overturn, overturn, overturn! and let all the people say, Amen'" [loud cheers].

GEORGE THOMPSON, Esq., on rising to support the resolution, was received with enthusiastic cheering. He had no doubt of the expediency and the justice of seeking an entire disunion between the state on the one hand, and the church on the other [hear, hear]. It was a matter of congratulation that men were everywhere inquiring what were the legitimate and proper functions of the government, and what were the proper functions of the magistrate—whether he were supreme or subordinate. This Convention was seeking to inform the public mind on that important subject, and to show that the state had no authority whatever in matters of religious faith. He knew that the Conference would be assailed out of doors. It would be spoken of as though it were attacking religion. Every one present would observe that they were doing homage to Christian principle and Christian doctrine, while they asserted its ability to maintain itself; but the only credit which they would get out of doors would be, that they were seeking to overthrow the established religion of this country [laughter and cheers]. They would have to work their way through future years of reproach and odium, and they would have much to do to clear away from their characters the imputations which would be most liberally and profusely cast upon them [hear, hear]. There was not the same amount of information upon this subject among the dissenters of this country as there was on the other side of the Tweed. But their great antagonist would be the stupendous amount of mammon which was bound up with this question [hear, hear]. The established church was the resort of a large proportion of the aristocracy, as furnishing the means of support for the members of their families, who regarded that church in its temporal prospects, not in its spiritual usefulness. It must, however, be the object of the Conference to go on increasing light, diffusing information, and enlisting the energies of the Christian community in this great cause. But ultimate success was certain, because they were proceeding right onward upon fair principles. It was exceedingly gratifying to him, when recently at the foot of the Himmalaya mountains in India, to read of the mighty triumphs they had achieved in the way of resisting a measure about to be forced on the people of the country [cheers]. But they had now to seek the accomplishment of a positive good. They must declare the principle entirely, in its length and breadth, and leave nothing to be disclosed hereafter [hear, hear]. A spirit of inquiry would thus be excited, which would prove favourable to the attainment of their object [cheers]. He felt that the present assembly were doing right in commencing their career. Their earnest desire was to make Jesus Christ the sole head of his church, and therefore they set their face against all establishments of religion. The principles of an establishment were so anomalous that the mind startled at it—it was protestantism here, popery elsewhere, and paganism upon a small scale in particular parts of our dominions [hear, hear]. It was not, therefore, necessary to say that it was desirable that the people should be supplied with sound spiritual food. They stood upon a rock from which they could not be moved, in contending that Christ was king in his own church, and that they would not bow down to human authority in matters that exclusively concerned their consciences in the sight of God, and the worship of Him who created them [loud cheers].

Mr BEVERIDGE expressed his approbation of the resolution, inasmuch as they were introduced with a view of promoting a practical movement.

Mr HINCKES stated that there were about three or four hundred congregations belonging to the non-subscribing presbyterian dissenters of England, but he believed that himself and his co-delegate, representing one congregation, were the only persons belonging to that body present. He regretted that circumstances had taken place which prevented other members from joining in the present movement. He hoped, however, that all difficulty would be speedily removed out of the way, and that they would be found strenuously advocating this cause.

Mr ROBINSON (of Kettering) then took an objection to the words "ultimately petition parliament," and suggested by way of amendment, that the word "ultimately" should either be omitted, or the word "immediately" introduced.

Mr SLATER having seconded the amendment, a long discussion arose, which terminated in an understanding that a substantive motion, if approved by the Conference, should be brought forward on the propriety of that assembly petitioning the legislature.

The CHAIRMAN announced that a list had been prepared to be distributed among the delegates, containing the names of the gentlemen nominated for the committee and council; various suggestions were made as to the proper measures to be adopted with reference to the selection to be made. It was ultimately agreed that the subject should be brought forward to-morrow.

The meeting then adjourned.

THURSDAY.—MORNING SITTING.

The Conference re-assembled at ten o'clock.

Mr THOMAS THOMAS, president of the baptist college at Pontypool, moved,

"That John Dunlop, Esq., of Brockloch, do take the chair."

EDWARD SWAINE, Esq., seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

The CHAIRMAN said, that, after the profound remarks which they had heard during that Conference, and after the manner in which their feelings had been excited, though not inflamed, by the sentiments which had been so beautifully expressed, as well as so ably defended, he did not think it necessary to detain them by any prefatory observations. Having left, some years back, the Scottish establishment, and having spent the subsequent period in communion with the dissenters, with the exception of a few years, if exception it could be called, spent in enjoying the communion and examining the order of the transatlantic churches, he thought he might say that he had seen the practical workings of both systems [hear, hear]. The man who gave personality to the state, who clothed the state with a conscience, did, in his opinion, his utmost to surrender the right of private judgment—did his utmost to give to society what belonged to the individual, and to entail upon the individual a system of degradation and of slavery. In spiritual matters, contrary to the rule in civil, the spiritual bondsman always persecuted the spiritual freeman [hear, hear]. This seemed to be an invariable result. If, in this country, they had been freed from the maximum of persecution, let it be remembered that it was owing to the numerical strength of the dissenting bodies [hear, hear]. Still they felt that they were treated in some measure as inferiors, although, by their birthright, they had a right to claim perfect equality. It was a saying of the great Roman orator and philosopher, that the state was based upon an equality of rights. He admitted fully that there might be a variety of fortunes—that there might be diversity of talents; but the very idea of a state implied a community of rights—a commonwealth [hear, hear]. He would not detain them on that subject further than to say, that if they endeavoured to rid themselves of an unhallowed and an un-English yoke, they acted in accordance with the spirit of constitutional liberty and with the rights of simple justice. The Conference were fully aware of the chilling effects of establishments in this country. If, in the north, they had not the advantages of apostolical succession and the crosier, yet establishments, stripped of all these adventitious circumstances, in themselves caused those under their shadow to sink into spiritual carelessness; spiritual rebellion was going forward; society was reduced to a cold neutrality, and that vital work which agitated, while it purified, the social system, and the individual conscience, was carefully excluded [hear, hear]. It was not enough to avow opinions and to state principles; they must add action to precept; they must not only have faith, but they must have open and determined profession, even to martyrdom [cheers]. It was time for them to assert their principles, to organise and methodise their movements, so as to give it an aggressive and active character; to exert themselves as men, as Christians, and as citizens, by every legitimate and useful means. He would say more, but they must now proceed to the practical business of the Conference [cheers]. Let them recollect the importance of details. In the business of life, it was the non-essentials, and not the essentials, which occasioned such diversity of opinion. He hoped, therefore, that they would all endeavour to bring these important deliberations to an harmonious and successful issue [cheers].

Mr E. MIALL then rose, and said that there was the strongest desire on the part of the committee that the choice of the future council should be conducted in the most honest and impartial mode. The lists circulated yesterday would be entirely withdrawn. He begged now to move that four committees be appointed to draw up lists for England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

Dr COX seconded the resolution.

A desultory discussion then ensued as to the best mode of carrying out the objects in view. It was ultimately agreed that the committees should be appointed, and they were accordingly chosen.

Mr J. P. MURSELL, of Leicester, then read a paper on the means by which the Conference proposed to carry out the object which it contemplated; and the spirit in which those means should be cultivated, and concluded with an address to dissenters to do their duty. The following is a brief summary of the contents of the document:—

In estimating the way most suited to help forward their object they must not forget the means by which the nonconformists of this country had attained their present position. It was obvious that they had risen to the influence they now possessed, by devoting themselves, in all simplicity and sincerity, to diffuse revealed religion. The spread of general knowledge and other things had, undoubtedly, tended to strengthen their cause; but their deep and earnest advocacy of the truths of the gospel lay at the foundation of their success. It was of prime importance, just at that crisis, that they should carefully nourish those elements to which they owed their success, otherwise the glory of dissent would depart. Those who had taken upon themselves the responsibility of preparing for that assembly, were persuaded that a consistent, persevering, and successful advance on the establishment of these realms must be sustained by the earnest piety and the genuine devotion of the land. One discouraging feature, in connexion with the convention, was the apathy of dissenters of England. Many of them shrunk from approaching the question of separation of church and state, as a wild and extravagant attempt: others trembled at the thought of the conflict it involved. It must be their object to unite all in the movement. Besides this, some sincere and simple-minded churchmen looked on them as misguided fanatics, and enemies to all order; whilst others suspected them of a desire to seize the emoluments of the church. They must endeavour to counteract opposition of that nature. A large majority of the industrious classes remained in utter ignorance of the reasons for dissent; and it would be the duty of the Anti-state-church Society to grapple with that darkness. One effective mode of diffusing correct information, and of creating popular sympathy, was the circulation of appropriate tracts. A depôt should be established, in which every variety of tracts of which the subject admitted should be lodged, and from which, as from a common centre, they should be sent through the land. Those papers should be simple though never puerile, plain but never coarse. They should, as a general rule, be addressed to the judgment rather than to the reason, and should present the results of logic without its forms. Exhaustless opportunities offered themselves from this single department of means. Reason and revelation, history and tradition, observation and experience, threw open their ample stores to devotion and zeal—to learning and research—to ingenuity and taste—to argument and reason—to grave warning and to impassioned appeal. That was a field that the Anti-state-church Society would do well assiduously to cultivate. In connexion with the circulation of such papers, they should seek to diffuse information by popular addresses and lectures. By these means the younger branches of families, connected with their congregations, would grow up well informed on ecclesiastical history and polity, and would be able to give a reason why they dissented. There were no efforts which the society could put forth which would more effectually promote the great ends it proposed to pursue than if suitable lecturers were engaged for the purpose, such as would command the attention and insure the respect of the educated and refined, as well as inform and interest every class of society. Nor should the society neglect the great work of popular education. Great efforts were being made by the advocates of the established church to lay hold of the children of the poor; rank, wealth, and power were embarking in the crusade against freedom of thought and independence of opinion; parishes which, a few years since, had been silent and inactive, were now set in motion, and in every town and village of the empire strenuous exertions were being made to arrest the progress of dissent. It became them to educate the children of the poor, as far as they could, in accordance with the spirit of the age; and most strenuous and unwearied exertions should be put forward to accomplish that object. But notwithstanding all they might effect by the diffusion of tracts—the institution of lectures—the establishment of schools, or any other suitable means, it must be obvious to all, that the scene of ultimate operation must be that in which the suffrages of the people were recorded. They might prepare the public mind by wise and persevering efforts, but it was to that point things should ultimately come. The dissenters must avail themselves of their rights as citizens, to advance their great Master's cause. They must endeavour to send to the parliament of the nation men of strong heads and sound hearts—men who feared God and venerated his Son, and who would be prepared to carry the great and sound principles which they had learnt from his word, into the presence of nobles and before the thrones of princes. To work the machinery he had enumerated, funds would be required; nor should the society enter on its labours until they had secured an income of at least £1,000. Next in importance to a distinct understanding of the means by which it was proposed to attain their great purpose, was the spirit in which those means should be used. There should be a clear perception of the end at which they aimed, a solemn sense of their obligations to the great head of the Christian church. A desire to redress the political wrongs which the established church inflicts on the nation, to counteract the innumerable social mischiefs which it produced, and to put an end to the grotesque airs which in the name of religion it played out before a half-instructed populace, might be commendable enough; but such aims, however good, were too low, and the motives whence they sprung too feeble to sustain them in that great work. In the profound convictions and silent impression of adevout heart, lay the best guarantee for prudence, discretion, and candour. The efforts on which they were entering should be carried out in a candid and charitable temper, the most attentive ear being given to the arguments of the friends of church establishments, and every possible respect paid to parties holding opinions opposite to their own. A spirit of Christian candour, and of most enlarged charity, were compatible with a decided adhesion to, and a manly advocacy of, truth. Were they to peimit their candour to degenerate into compromise, and their forbearance into forgetfulness of self-respect, they would inflict an incurable wound on the cause they espoused. They must couple firmness of purpose with courtesy of temper. There must be no hesitancy, no temporising, no vacillation. Their aspect must be such as would arrest the attention; their attitude, such as would betoken determination; and the whole of their bearing, such as would render it madness for men to trifle with them. Keeping the great object of the Society constantly before them, they must rise above the elements which agitated places of commerce, the halls of senators, or the palaces of kings. The lower considerations, which those might well consult, who adopted expediency as the sole ground of their proceedings, must be spurned and disdained. To give efficiency to the means which it was proposed to employ, a spirit of union, candid, cordial, and vital union, should prevail in the society. The best understanding, and the most perfect confidence, should subsist between its members, and a spirit of active co-operation pervade all its parts. While the society should enter on its labours, with a settled determination not to relinquish its object, it must not expect immediate success. No one capable of looking at the question at issue, in all its vast dimensions, could avoid feeling that the Anti-state-church Society was preparing to grapple with a mightier system than any against which the friends of freedom had ever yet contended. Who could think of the antiquity of the

English church, of the sympathy subsisting between it and the great principle of state establishments—of its connexion with "thrones, and principalities, and powers"—of the strong and binding roots which it had struck far and wide in the aristocratic soil—of the manifold associations of its numerous votaries—of the unprecedented changes in the history of their country which its removal involved—of the talent, the erudition, the bigotry, and the power, which would simultaneously rise to its rescue—who could think of these and a thousand other features which that great scheme disclosed to the reflecting mind, and not feel that their cause depended less on the ardour of passion than on the steadfastness of principle, and that unabated energy and persevering love of truth should distinguish those who entered into it? It would be necessary to cultivate the feeling of a superiority to the opinions of men. Those who had a childish love of popularity should avoid any conjunction with the projected society. Misrepresentation, reproach, and calumny, awaited the faithful adherents of the cause; and even their professed friends would for a time impede their movements. The dissenters of Great Britain were invited to combine their efforts for the emancipation of the Christian religion from the unhallowed control of the state. Combinations were constantly effected for civil and commercial objects. They now sought a combination of a different kind, and for a holier purpose. Hitherto there had been no direct effort made to remove the source of the evils which they deplored; there had been no wise, organised, and properly sustained aggressive efforts. They had, however, imperceptibly grown powerful, and the talent, the wealth, and the knowledge which resided among them, could no longer be safely despised; while their influence was incomparably increased by the habits of sobriety, morality, and piety which prevailed among them. The supporters of establishments were on the alert, and were leaving no efforts untried by which they might regain the confidence of the people of England. Besides errors and innovations which affected the foundations of their faith and the purity of their worship, direct and carefully arranged attacks were being made in the great principle of religious freedom. Antichrist was bestirring himself, and coming forth like a slumbering lion from his lair, shaking his entangled mane. Everything was placed under the control of the endowed sect. The press, with some praiseworthy exceptions, was lending its powerful aid in favour of the system, and was breathing a spirit worthy of the times of a Bonner or a Laud. Did they not hear a voice calling them to united exertion? But let the nonconformists of England be true to themselves, and no minister could withstand them. They might laugh to scorn the foolish dreams and idle threats of despotic councils. To the arena of Christian conflict they invited their opponents; and by the use of such weapons as he had described, they would push their triumphs. It was, then, to no trivial or ordinary work that the energies of the dissenters of Great Britain were invoked, but to an enterprise worthy of their ancestry, their reputation, and their hopes. Whatever projects existing circumstances or future coincidences might put before them, there was none more appropriate in its character, more urgent in its claims, or more momentous in its results, than the rescue of Christianity from the prostitution of the state. It was the end towards which the eyes of thousands had been turned along the vista of slowly-gliding centuries. It was the day for the arrival of which the cries of the souls from beneath the altar had unceasingly pierced the skies, and for which thousands of prayers were recorded in heaven. The clergy of the established church, whom they esteemed as pious men, should have their attention pointed to the direful anomalies and the predicted doom of their anti-christian institution. But, although these might be expected to turn a deaf ear to their appeal, to the nonconformists of these realms they looked with confidence and hope. They besought them to reflect deeply on their position; to maintain the high character they held in the esteem of independent men of every language and of every clime; to fulfil the mighty destiny to which all creation called them; to refuse to leave to another generation the immortal honour of beginning a great work, which, sooner or later, men of fidelity, of valour, and of holy zeal must take up; to resolve to pass down to the grave with the satisfaction of having devised in all wisdom, and promoted in all charitableness, the liberation of their beloved country and of their hallowed faith from the fetters of an ignominious bondage, and of having, at least, thrown a bow of promise across the heavens, beneath whose splendid arch their children might pass with reverential recollections of the deeds of their fathers, and with songs of melody upon their lips, into that bright and promised region whose sky the thick mists of antichrist should never darken, and upon whose soil the blasting hoof of ecclesiastical oppression should never tread.

The reading of this document was frequently interrupted by loud cheers.

Dr JENKYN moved the following resolution:—

"That, while this Conference feels it to be incumbent upon all the friends of true religion to seek, with deep earnestness and persevering energy, the dissolution of the union between the church and the state, it distinctly and solemnly repudiates the use of any means in the attainment of this end, but such as are based on moral principles, and are in strict accordance with the genius and directions of Christianity and the will of God. That it proposes to address itself to the great work it contemplates by endeavouring to impress on the minds of religious men of all denominations a becoming sense of the importance of the subject, by availing itself of all suitable opportunities and modes of informing their fellow countrymen, and of creating and directing public opinion, with the view of ultimately prevailing upon the legislature of the country to leave divine truth to its intrinsic claims and power, and to the protection and blessing of the Great Head of the church.

"2. That this Conference is unfeignedly solicitous that this work should be prosecuted in the spirit of Christian forbearance, candour, and charity, but with unflinching firmness and untiring perseverance; that it should be carried on prayerfully, and in a constant sense of dependence upon the blessing of the Most High: and that any departure from this temper will tend to retard the success of the enterprise, which every nonconformist must have at heart.

"3. That, in the judgment of this Conference, the solemn duty devolves upon the dissenters of Great Britain to commence such wise, united, and well-directed efforts as may issue in the separation of the church from the state; and they are hereby respectfully and earnestly invoked, laying aside all considerations of temporary expediency, to take their ground on the sacred principles they profess, to assert the spirituality of the kingdom of Christ, and never to rest until this great and fundamental truth shall be practically recognised by the government of the United Kingdom."

He said that he felt very happy at having taken a share in the proceedings of that Conference. He only wished that all his London brethren were there with him [hear, hear]. It had been said that no respectable London minister had joined the Conference. He thought it would be well if those who said so were to define the meaning of the word "respectable." At a late trial a judge asked a man what he meant by a man's being respectable; and the answer was, that the person kept a gig [a laugh]. Now, if that were the standard of respectability, they were not perhaps entitled to the term. He regretted exceedingly to see the article which had appeared in the *Congregational Magazine* for that month. He was an intimate friend of the editor, and he would say nothing of him in an unfriendly spirit. It had ben said in that paper that they were a comparatively small number of persons. If, however, their opponents had been there they would probably have come to a different opinion [hear, hear]. Even the *Times* newspaper had spoken of the largeness of their numbers. Dr Jenkyn then proceeded to quote several extracts from the article in the *Congregational Magazine*, commenting on them *seriatim*, and expressing his disapproval of the sentiments which the article contained. He said that it was not by worldly influence that they sought to accomplish their objects, but by the influence of truth. He believed that they would soon have the whole world going along with them. Their cause was the cause of pure and undefiled religion. Naturalists told them of an animal which could only be caught by besmearing all the avenues and approaches to its hiding place, and which would rather be caught than pass through any of those places when thus besmeared. In like manner he believed that such was the purity of their motives that they would maintain religion undefiled at any cost, rather than submit to its pollution [cheers].

Dr PRICE said that he had no wish to make any personal attack on the editor of the *Congregational Magazine*, or on any other person. But they might easi'y understand why certain parties were disposed to stand aloof from this movement. There were circumstances which would account for that. The first of which circumstances was that there were now taken out of the hands of individuals or cliques, whether in London, in Manchester, in Birmingham, or in Liverpool, the control and management of dissenting matters [cheers]. They were now placing their affairs where they ought to be, in the hands of the dissenting body itself [renewed cheers]. On former occasions, they had had conventions or conferences, but those had been totally different in their design and character from the present. Some London body accustomed to pull the wire behind the scenes, which wire moved the dissenters of the whole kingdom, had on former occasions called on their brethren throughout the empire to come up to London in order that they might be strengthened by the long array of persons walking to Downing street [hear, hear]. He had no doubt that an organisation would now be formed, which would comprise the whole body of dissenters; and then all must be content to take a subordinate part. The object of their organisation, hitherto, had been the removal of some practical grievances, and they had thus cushioned their principles. Their object now was to vindicate religion itself in the light of the open day, and, in the spirit of the paper which had been read, to disenthral the church which lay enslaved, and therefore enfeebled, from the servitude in which she was placed. Their efforts should be commensurate with the demands of the times, and consistent with Christian fidelity. With these observations he begged to second the resolution [cheers].

Mr ROBERTSON, of Edinburgh, said, the grand reason why he presented himself at that time, was to endeavour, if possible, to strengthen the sympathy which ought to exist between the dissenters of England and the dissenters of Scotland. He embraced that opportunity of expressing this feeling of delight at the courteous and Christian manner in which the English dissenters then assembled had treated the delegates from his native land. He would say to the dissenters of England, that those in Scotland, who had to some extent fought their battles, were prepared to join hand in hand with them at the present time, and to assist them to the utmost of their power until they had achieved the victory [cheers]. They were not disposed, after what they had done, to fold their arms, and retire from the field. He trusted that they had, under the divine blessing, effected some good already, but they were prepared for doing more [hear, hear]. He hoped the delegates would, on some future occasion, meet in Scotland; so that they might feel that there was no distinction between them, that they all wore the same uniform, that they were all fighting under the same great captain, and that they had the same standard of civil and religious liberty waving over them [cheers]. It was astonishing to think what Christian men could do when really in earnest. He was a member of the first voluntary association formed in Scotland; how delightful was it to think of the progress of voluntaryism since that period [hear, hear]. Holding the views they did, they must be successful. Though the solid globe should be riven to its centre, the truth of God would be maintained in its purity. Under the blessing of the Great Head of the church, let them be assured that ere long their efforts would be crowned with success, and the whole earth be filled with the knowledge of the Lord.

Dr M'FARLANE, of Glasgow, said he did not, like his friend Mr Robertson, represent the capital of Scotland, but he represented that city which was said to hold capital. He begged to throw out a suggestion to the Conference, which he was persuaded, if acted upon, would be attended with immense benefit to the cause which they desired to promote. They would recollect the papers to which they had just listened, amongst other means for carrying out the objects of the Conference, recommended that plain, simple, and telling tracts should be printed and circulated all over the land. As one who takes a great interest in the voluntary church controversy in Scotland, he was enabled to state that nothing had done more good in that country than the circulation of such tracts. These tracts had there been as gunpowder, which had exploded the establishment [hear, hear]. The speaker then referred to a tract of this description, which had produced the most powerful effects in Scotland, and stated the heads of it to the meeting. The first was that a religious establishment could not be necessary for the propagation of the gospel, or for maintaining it, because there was no reference to any such thing among the institutions of Christ; the second, that no trace of any such thing could be found in the early history of the church; another head was, that a religious establishment was impolitic; another, that a religious establishment had a tendency to secularise the church of Christ. The author of this tract was Dr A. Marshall. The delegates might call this tract a sermon; but into what had that sermon grown? The reformation of Germany was locked up in Luther's sermon; that of England in Wycliffe's [cheers]. One word in conclusion; and it would be in the shape of anecdote. He recollected reading that, when Michael Angelo was making a grand statue of Pope Julian, he first represented his holiness with a Bible in his hand. But what did the Pope say? "Away with your Bible; give me a sword." Now swords were the proper representatives of establishment principles. Let voluntaries carry out their principles, and they would endure, when the Julian principles were leveled with the dust [cheers]. They had heard from Dr Wardlaw's paper that their cause was instinct with life. Aye, immortality was written on its forehead. It was the cause of truth, and truth was eternal; it was the cause of scripture, and the word of God would abide for ever; it was the cause of God; and, as the Lord liveth, it would finally triumph [loud cheers].

Dr CAMPBELL came forward at the call of the meeting, and said that, although repeatedly pressed by the committee to speak, he had sat silent there three days as a *witness* [loud cheers]. He became almost a reluctant convert, but a real one. Nor did he conceal the fact, but declared it in open day, which those who read the *Patriot* well knew [loud cheers]. He looked on this assembly as the second step of a series, in which the disruption of the Scottish kirk was the first, and this would not be the last [cheers]. When he thought whence the members of the Conference came together, and who they were, he felt that it must command universal respect [cheers]. He cared nothing for rash and random accusations; they were unworthy of their authors [cheers]. The representatives from Scotland were such as pledged the whole body of Scottish dissenters to the support of the movement. Ireland, too, had done what she could [cheers]. As to England, many were absent who ought to be present, and who, in future, would be present [cheers]. But who were present? How many tutors of colleges? From Homerton, Coward, Bradford, Carmarthen, Brecon, and several more [loud cheers]. Look, too, at the press [cheers]? He saw there the *Eclectic* [cheers]—the *Patriot* [cheers]—which came next? [cries of "the *Noncon.*" followed by enthusiastic cheers]—and the *Christian Examiner* [cheers]. Had the choice been given him to remove the present Conference, and replace them with the absent, they would be weakness itself compared with the present [loud cheers]. A great man had sometimes spoken of himself as "the most abused man in the world." Now he, Dr Campbell, could not say that; but there was certainly no man in England whom the *Nonconformist* had so much abused as himself [laughter]. He had, however, in private, often borne testimony to the value of that paper, and he hoped that he and the editor would be the better friends for having seen each other [laughter]. Here, too, were pastors of churches, and lay representatives, many of whom had suffered for their principles. The Conference had done much; and, whether he looked at the spirit, principle, or language of the papers read, the papers had lost nothing by the absence of any man. We were all agreed,—a wonderful unanimity. He had never attended a conference in which there was so much propriety [hear]. One word respecting the absent. He was greatly pleased with the kind and Christian manner in which the Conference had spoken of the absent [hear]. Though absent they were not adverse; although of a different mind respecting this movement, yet the bulk of them were prepared to die for their principles; and hereafter they would be with the movement. He regeetted that the article in the *Congregational Magazine* had been mentioned, for a firmer friend to dissenting principles he did not know than Mr Blackburn. Would the Conference be stedfast? ["Yes."] Would they patronise the *Eclectic*? ["Yes."] The *Patriot*? ["Yes."] The *Nonconformist*? ["Yes."] The *Christian Examiner*? ["Yes."] The *Wesleyan Chronicle*? ["Yes."] The — the — the (cries of *Christian Witness*)? ["Yes."] "Very well, I have done."

The resolution before the meeting was then put from the chair and carried unanimously.

Mr J. BURNET then moved, which was seconded—

"That a scheme of organisation to liberate the Christian religion in the British empire from state interference should be adopted."

The scheme consisted of a series of clauses, part of which, after some verbal alterations, were agreed to.

The respective lists of nominations for the Council having been brought up, it was agreed that the names should be printed, together with any fresh

nominations which might be made, and forwarded to the delegates both in town and country.

The Conference then adjourned until 5 o'clock.

Evening Sitting.

The Conference resumed its sittings at 5 o'clock, when

Dr Cox was called to the chair.

The consideration of the scheme of organisation was then resumed, and after a number of verbal amendments, the whole of its clauses were agreed to.

Upon the fourteenth resolution being moved, Mr JAMES RICHARDSON, of London, member for Scarborough, said, he told the meeting at its first sitting that he had a motion to submit, which he gave to the business committee. As no notice had been taken of it, he wanted to have it read. He thought kindness and courtesy to himself, and justice to the Conference, demanded it, even if it were by them deemed irrelevant. It was replied, that the committee unanimously decided that it was irrelevant. Afterwards, in answer to a member, Dr Price stated that Mr R. wanted a committee to correspond with the Anti-corn-law League and another society, in order to establish a daily paper. When the third clause of the 14th resolution was submitted for consideration Mr R. again rose, and said, wisdom had been defined, "using the best means to attain the best ends;" he admitted that essays, tracts, lectures, speeches, &c. were desirable, but the best means would be to establish a daily newspaper. Of the practicability of such a scheme, he said, supposing an advertisement had appeared in the *Nonconformist*, signed F. A. Cox, calling upon every representative to procure twenty subscribers, at a penny a-day, for which they were to receive five daily newspapers, containing the last and best intelligence, and edited by the first-rate talent, would not all have responded to it? and that would produce 3,500 subscribers; but, taking the number at 3,000, as 1,750 would pay its expenses, he would willingly give £1,000 a-year to the society whose property the paper would probably become, and that would be an instrument overwhelming and irresistible.

Mr J. EDWARDS, of Brighton, in addressing the meeting impressed upon it the importance of attending to that part of the scheme of organisation which referred to the registration of voters. They should get every one to register whom they knew to be in favour of congregational principles; and when an election took place they should support only those who would seek to carry out their object [cheers]. Great attention should also be paid to the local press. The press was the great instrument with which they must work. No expense should be spared which was necessary to ensure the accomplishment of their object.

A delegate reminded the Conference of the recent decision of the court of Common Pleas, giving to persons who occupy rooms in a house which are rated at £10 a-year, and which they take in an unfurnished state, the right of voting at an election. He thought it highly important for their cause that it should be known that every occupier of any premises rated at £10 a-year and upwards, except those who were living in furnished apartments, was in possession of the franchise [hear, hear].

Mr J. ROBERTS, of Chesterton, moved, and it was seconded, "That the Conference empower their executive committee to appoint a treasurer. Carried unanimously.

J. CONDER, Esq., moved that the executive committee appointed to convene the Conference should have power to act until the committee chosen by the Council should have been formally appointed.

Mr J. PRINGLE seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

It was announced that the committee would sit on the following day, from eleven till two, in order to receive delegates, and dispose of the necessary business of the Conference.

Mr J. P. MURSELL, of Leicester, called the attention of the Conference to the necessity which existed for liberal contributions in order to carry out the plans of the Conference. They wanted at least £1000 a year for that purpose [hear, hear]. It should be recollected that they were not going to spend their money on secretaries and other officers. He hoped that for some time to come they would have no paid officers in the Council [cheers]. He felt persuaded that if every delegate exerted himself to raise subscriptions in his own locality, they would have not merely £1000 but £5000, if it were necessary, to bring their plans of action into practical operation [cheers]. For himself he would say that, while he had life and strength, he would labour by all peaceful and constitutional means to overthrow the established church [cheers].

JOSEPH STURGE, Esq., said he had felt great pleasure in acceding to the request to move the following resolution, if he might do so in plain quaker phrase:—

"Resolved that the thanks of this meeting be cordially tendered to the Executive Committee for the zeal and wisdom with which they have made arrangements for the business of the Conference, and to the Rev. Dr Cox in his capacity of provisional secretary; to the gentlemen who have favoured the Conference with able and valuable papers; to the Secretaries of the Conference, and the Business Committee, for their attention to their respective duties; and likewise to the Rev. John Burnett, the Rev. Dr Marshall, the Rev. Dr Young, the Rev. James Acworth, John Dunlop, Esq., of Brocklock, and the Rev. Dr Cox, for their conduct in presiding over the meetings of the Conference."

With the permission of the chair, he would take that opportunity of making one or two remarks, which he had abstained from making before, from a desire not to interrupt the progress of business. He had felt rather uneasy on account of what had passed at the Conference on the subject of municipal elections. He attached great consequence to men performing their duties as citizens, wherever they could be performed without a violation of the rights of conscience, and he thought it of great importance that the matter to which he had referred should be placed in the right light. He (Mr Sturge) had gone into the Birmingham council without making the declaration, and he knew one or two persons who were in the same position [hear, hear]. They had never been prosecuted, although, perhaps, they were liable to prosecution. He thought this explanation ought to remove the impression which appeared to exist in some minds that a person necessarily took the declaration on being admitted into a council; but he did not think any consistent dissenter could take the declaration in reference to the church establishment [hear]. He wished to make one or two observations in reference to the circumstances under which he had come to that Conference. It was now seven years ago since he told Lord John Russell, the then leader of the House of Commons, that so far as he knew the feeling of the dissenters in the neighbourhood in which he resided, he believed that nothing would satisfy them short of the separation of the church from the state [loud cheers]. At that time many dissenters, who ought to have taken the lead, were, he was sorry to say, acting as a drag upon the movement. There were few, in fact, who were pursuing a steady and consistent course in the right direction—few who were endeavouring to train public opinion as they were endeavouring to train it, on that occasion. Now, when asked to form one of the provisional committee, he had declined for three reasons. One was that he could not properly fulfil the duties which would be imposed upon him; secondly, remembering the success of their efforts against the Factory bill, he felt persuaded that abler men would be found to fill the office; and thirdly, he had, he must confess, formed a deliberate opinion that they could not accomplish their object, or remove many other great evils under which the country groaned, but by the destruction, in the first instance, of that enormous evil, class legislation [great cheering]. But when, however, he saw individuals whom he had hoped to see taking a leading part in the movement, turning their backs upon it, he could not refuse to attend the Conference on the nomination of his fellow townsmen [hear, hear]. In allusion to the object to which he had just referred, that of the electoral rights of the people [cheers], he must confess that he had found by experience, that it required much less moral courage to brave the perils of the ocean, to be exposed to a pestilential climate, or even to visit almost alone the dens of slavetraders, where he was surrounded by those who were bitterly opposed to his object, namely, to seek the liberation of his sable brethren, than to stem the prejudices which were excited against him by demanding a full measure of justice for his suffering fellow-countrymen [hear, hear]. He could fully sympathise with the observation of his friend Charles Stovel—yes, if it were an enemy he could have borne it, "but it was thou my friend, mine acquaintance; we took sweet counsel together, we went up to the house of God in company." Well, all he wished to say further on the subject was to ask them on their return home not to do anything to discourage the feeling to which he now alluded. Now he rejoiced in the proceedings of that conference, and there were some things which gave him particular satisfaction. Their determination with regard to the *regium donum*, was most gratifying. Ten years ago he could hardly find one in a hundred, except his own denomination, who saw this in the light they now did. He was glad to see such a disposition to give up titles, especially the little title "reverend." Those who wished to retain it, he believed, could hardly throw a stone with a clear hand at the title of Right Reverend Father in God, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Another thing which had cheered his mind, was the readiness with which the meeting had consented to the proposal of his friend, Arthur Albright, with respect to the influence of church establishments in perpetuating war. The proposition could not have been received more cordially in a peace convention [cheers]. He had felt some anxiety on account of the distinction made between things secular and things sacred; he thought they might yet attain clearer views on that subject [hear, hear]. He believed that when Daniel, in ancient days, was performing his duty as the minister of Darius, he as much felt himself under a sacred obligation, as when praying to God three times a day [hear, hear]. In carrying out this movement, they must, he thought, endeavour to impress upon all that the duty, though it referred to a secular matter, rested on a sacred obligation. After some further remarks, he concluded by proposing the resolution.

Mr W. HIGGS, of Gloucester, seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

Mr JOHN BURNET proposed the following resolution:—

"That the Conference, in view of recent events in Scotland, gratefully acknowledges the devoted and persevering efforts of those advocates of the voluntary principle in that country, who were mainly instrumental in superinducing the secession of upwards of five hundred ministers from the church of Scotland, and would earnestly recommend that they continue to urge ministers and members of the Free church faithfully to renounce in theory, as they have renounced in practice, the principle of an establishment, as unscriptural, impolitic, and unjust."

It had formerly been the cry of those who were then connected with the state church in Scotland, "We must absorb dissent;" but instead of their absorbing dissent, dissent had absorbed them [cheers]. They must encourage the dissenters of Scotland to eradicate the theory of an establishment, now that they had made such an inroad upon the practice. They must impress on their Scottish friends the necessity of making their principles tally with their practice, if they would enjoy the sympathy and fellowship of the dissenters of England [hear, hear]. He impressed on the meeting the necessity for making numerous exertions to raise funds in order to carry out the objects of the Conference. This was necessary, in order to persuade their Scottish friends, as well as their English, that they were really in earnest in the cause which they had undertaken. One gentleman had suggested that they should raise £5,000 a-year. Why, looking at the number of the English counties, he would be ashamed if they did not raise double that sum [cheers]. They would depend for success, in a great degree, upon money—money was the proof of earnestness, the pledge of sincerity; it was only by his conduct in that respect that they could feel sure that any man would perform his part in reference to their object [hear, hear]. Now, before he sat down, as that meeting had chosen to express its thanks to the persons who were officially connected with that movement, and to himself as one of them, he would say that whether the ministers of London, or the ministers of England, or the ministers of Scotland, or the ministers of Ireland, choose to come forward on such an occasion, or whether they choose to hold back, he considered the great principle of religious liberty so important, so interesting, so commanding, that for that principle he would be content to stand out alone, and he would derive his consolation in this solitude from the grandeur of the principle itself [cheers].

Mr WILSON in seconding the resolution said, that at that late hour of the evening, and after the excellent speech which they had just heard, it was not his intention to trespass at any length on their time. He had merely to say, that from an observation of seven years, he could testify to the fact that the Scotch voluntaries laid the foundation for that agitation, which had forced the church of Scotland into the position in which she was now placed. He had great pleasure in seconding the resolution, and he hoped that it would have the effect of opening the eyes of Dr Chalmers, and those who thought with him, to the evils of the establishment principle.

Mr WAITE, of Bristol, expressed a hope that the documents which had been read to the meeting, would be printed in such a form as to allow of their extensive circulation. He was sure that their diffusion would be attended with great benefit to the cause which they sought to promote. He should be glad to know, from the committee, whether they were likely soon to have the means of circulating those documents.

Mr HARE said, that he would undertake to bring the subject before the Executive Committee on the following morning.

Mr PRINGLE suggested that they should mingle with gratitude to the living, a grateful recollection of the dead; who had, in former times, zealously and efficiently advocated the voluntary principle. He referred more especially to a minister of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, who was, he said, the first to make a systematic attack on the principle of an establishment.

The suggestion did not meet with the concurrence of the meeting; and the resolution was passed in its original form.

A DELEGATE said, that reference had been made to the established church. But he would ask, whether they were to say nothing respecting the Wesleyan methodists, who were said to hold the principle of an established church?

Mr HIGGS, of Gloucester, begged to say that he was a Wesleyan minister; and he could tell the gentleman who had just addressed the meeting, that those who said the Wesleyan methodists held the principle of an established church, had no more right to say so than they would have to say, that Sir Robert Peel and his party represented the whole of the people of this country [hear, hear, and cheers].

The CHAIRMAN then said, that he should not have detained them for a single moment at that late hour, did he not think it courteous to return them his best thanks for the honour of being selected, by such a Convention as that, for the few services which he had been able to render to their cause. He had come to that cause, in the first instance, he would own, impeded by great difficulties [hear, hear]. In that cause he had laboured for three months, almost night and day; but he felt that whatever expenditure of time or energies might be required of him, he could not withhold it, when called upon to combine with them in advocating the great end for which they had assembled. Let him be allowed to say a word in reference to those brethren who had differed from him—differed with strong expressions in the first instance, although happily, only in the first instance, with respect to the course which he had felt it his duty to pursue, in connexion with gentlemen with whom he was early and happily, and he hoped he should ever be, associated. With regard to those gentlemen who differed from him, he imputed to them no improper motives or feelings. He knew that many of them were men of God. He knew, too, that in their principles they were right, although they were not at the present moment carrying them out in the same manner as the members of that Convention; and he was persuaded, that if they had been present at their meetings, they would have been disposed to unite with them, seeing, as they would do, that they were decided men, but not violent men, and that they had taken up their cause from principle and feeling, and with a fervent, solemn, and united appeal to heaven to bless their undertaking. When he called to mind the great fact which future ages would learn, that in spite of predictions to the contrary, although there had been there an occasional warmth of manner, and although principles had been expressed and avowed with the earnestness which was natural to ardent spirits, disposed to carry on to the utmost the work in which they were engaged, yet he had never seen an assembly, on the whole, more under the influence

of reason, right-thinking, and true religion [cheers]. He had never seen an assembly that was more fairly disposed, more easily superintended by the chairman appointed to preside over their deliberations; nor had he often seen an assembly where there had been greater unanimity. It was like a musical instrument, on which there were various strings struck, and sometimes momentary discords were introduced, but the discords were, in fact, the very soul of harmony in their combination; and the blending of different notes had produced a variety of tones sweet to every ear. He was convinced, too, that those tones would sound sweet to the world when they went forth through the medium of the press [cheers]. They were not to imagine for a moment that the gentlemen whom they had met there from so many parts of the country, constituted all those who sympathised with them in that movement. He had piles of letters which showed the deep sympathy which was felt in the subject in every part of the kingdom, among persons who, fromvarious causes, had been unable either to come as delegates, or to send representatives to the Conference. Their hearts however were with them, and they were ready to offer them their co-operation. When they went down to their different localities he besought of them to carry with them the spirit of that meeting. If they held meetings themselves let them be peaceable though decided; let them be of a Christian character, and such as their profession required. He felt persuaded that whatever might be the difficulties in the way of the movement, and that although the tide might for a moment be repelled, it was rising and rushing onwards, and that it would overflow the opposition of their opponents, until at length the whole country would be overspread with the inundation of right sentiments and feelings. Let them constantly show that their great and final object was nothing short of this—the suppression of the connection between church and state [cheers]. It had been said that they were politicians. Yes; and their politics were to uphold the throne—God save the Queen [tremendous cheers]!—to uphold the civil constitution of the country, and to seek to extend knowledge, so that purified public opinion might form a people that would be the glory of the earth. Was their object just? [loud cries of "Yes."] Did they feel it to be such? ["Yes."] Were they determined to promote it? ["Yes."] If they were, then he said, let them keep three things constantly in view—union with each other, fearlessness of man, and faith in God [immense cheering].

The Conference was then dissolved.

SCHEME OF ORGANISATION.

We regret that it is out of our power to furnish in the present number an accurate and official copy of the scheme of organisation finally adopted by the Conference. We hope, however, to give the document entire in Wednesday's number. Meanwhile we give a short summary of the plan, with the view of putting our readers in possession of its principal provisions, without, however, vouching for their perfect accuracy. The first seven clauses are as follows:—

I. That a Society be now formed, to be intituled, "The British Anti-state-church Association."

II. That this Society be based upon the following principle:—

> "That in matters of religion man is responsible to God alone; that all legislation by secular governments in affairs of religion is an encroachment upon the rights of man, and an invasion of the prerogatives of God; and that the application by law of the resources of the state to the maintenance of any form or forms of religious worship and instruction, is contrary to reason, hostile to human liberty, and directly opposed to the genius of Christianity."

III. That the object of this Society be—

The liberation of religion from all governmental or legislative interference.

IV. That this object be sought by lawful, peaceful, and Christian means, and by such means only.

V. That every individual subscribing to the principle upon which this Society is based, and contributing not less than one shilling annually to its general fund, be admissible as a member.

VI. That the officers of this Society consist of a treasurer, three secretaries, three auditors, a council of five hundred, and an executive committee of fifty members.

VII. That the whole of the officers be, in the first instance, elected by the present Conference.

Then follow clauses providing that the Council and Executive Committee be appointed by the Conference;—that a Conference shall be convened at least once in three years, to be constituted in the same manner as the present; and that the Executive Committee be responsible to the Council of five hundred.

The steps necessary to be taken in filling vacancies in the offices of treasurer, secretary, and auditor, are then laid down, and the duties of the several classes of officers defined. The Council is to meet once a quarter, and to elect to all vacant offices, except in their own body; generally to superintend the affairs of the society, and to determine all plans of importance connected with its interests. Their term of office expiring at the next ensuing Conference.

The Executive Committee are to meet at least once a month, to carry out the plans of the Council, and are to be responsible to them.

They shall take measures for the collection and digest of statistical and other information relative to state churches; and shall procure, by public competition or otherwise, the writing of such tracts, or larger treatises, on the question of national religious establishments, as they may deem requisite to further the objects of this society.

They shall regulate the movements of public lecturers engaged in the name of this society; and shall give advice in the organisation of local associations in connexion with it.

They shall carry into execution, as opportunities present themselves, the several modes of action prescribed, whether by this Conference and succeeding conferences, or by the council, and shall act as a central committee of advice whenever occasions may require.

The following are, we believe, the modes of action contemplated by the society, but the statement must not be regarded as official.

The collection and digest, from acts of parliament, parliamentary returns, and other authentic public documents, of all such information as may throw light upon the nature and tendency of state churches.

The securing, by means of small prizes or otherwise, original essays on the question of state churches, adapted to the popular taste, and fitted to supply to the public, and especially to dissenters, needful and useful information on the subject.

The employment of lecturers, voluntary or otherwise, under the sanction and direction of the Executive Committee; to explain and enforce the fundamental principle of this society; to expose the evils which have resulted and are inseparable from any form of alliance between church and state; and to rouse the public, and especially professed nonconformists, to a due consideration of their duty in this matter.

The division of the United Kingdom into convenient districts, with a view to the holding of district conferences.

The giving of advice in the formation, wherever possible, of local associations, for the purpose of diffusing correct information, and of bringing public opinion to bear, as prudence may dictate, upon the composition of the House of Commons, and upon the decisions of the imperial parliament.

The promotion of the return to parliament, wherever practicable, of men of known integrity and ability, conversant with the principles, and favourable to the object, of this Society, and disposed to avail themselves of all suitable occasions for exciting discussion upon them; and the furnishing of such members, when returned, with all the special information the Society can command.

The support of such members whenever, upon intimation from them, the Council shall deem it advisable to agitate the question of state churches in the legislature, by means of petitions to the Houses of Parliament, and memorials to the throne, and in other appropriate and constitutional ways.

The removal of the question of national religious establishments as much as possible from under the influence of party feeling; the placing it upon the ground of what is due to Christianity itself, and to the best interests, temporal and spiritual, of the people; and the enlistment of all sections of the church of Christ, by energetic appeals to conscience.

The employment of whatsoever means, consistent with the spirit of Christianity, may be adapted to promote the one great object of "The British Anti-state-church Association."

RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

The annual meeting of the subscribers and friends to this institution, was held at Exeter hall, on Friday evening, the 3rd instant. The attendence exceeded that of the past year. S. Fletcher, Esq., of Manchester, took the chair.

The proceedings having been opened by prayer,

The Chairman then rose and said, that he had ever felt a warm attachment to this society, of which he had been a member for many years; thirty-three years since, he had assisted in the formation of an auxiliary at Manchester, which had continued in operation to the present day. On these occasions, it was well to recur to first principles and first beginnings. It was in troublous times that the Missionary society was launched, in the year 1794, five years after the Bible society was formed, and about the same period after this society was instituted, and all principally by the same individuals. He confessed he felt very jealous for the success of those institutions. He rejoiced in the multiplication and success of various religious societies, to which he felt it his duty to contribute; at the same time he viewed them but as children of the other great institutions, the support of which was an index of the spirituality and liberality of the church of God [applause]. There had been a disposition of late years to decry the efficacy of their exertions. It had been insinuated that, notwithstanding all that had been done, the population were deteriorating in morals and religion, and that they must go back to the monastic age [hear, hear]. But this was not the fact, he believed it to be a calumny. Notwithstanding all the evil which unhappily prevailed in society, he believed the moral and religious character of the nation was greatly improved. If the moral statistics of the last ten years could be fairly taken, it would be found that vice was decreasing; he had a document which went far to prove this. In the year 1831, 72,000 persons were taken in custody in the city of London, and in 1843, notwithstanding the extended district, and the increasing activity of the police, only 61,000 were taken in custody [cheers]. He did consider this an encouraging fact, and one which practically refuted the statements to which he had referred. He was happy to find that the society was in a prosperous state, and that its income and issues were equal to that of any former year, and concluded by calling upon its friends to continue their support in its cause [cheers].

Mr Jones, (the secretary) then read an abstract of the report, which furnished an interesting survey of the society's operations. It had issued, during the past year, 15,637,672 publications in ninety-four languages, making a total issue of nearly four hundred millions. The receipts of the society for benevolent purposes was nearly £7,000, giving a total, including the amount of sales, of £51,989. The expenditure had exceeded the benevolent income of the society by £1,122.

Mr E. Bickersteth rose to move:—

"I. That the Report, an abstract of which has been read, be received and printed; and that the following ministers and gentlemen be the officers and committee for the ensuing year, with power to fill up all vacancies [names read]."

What a wide and glorious survey the report had taken! Thanks be to God that he had led the society to such an extensive field of usefulness. He should be ashamed of himself and of his church, if he had not felt liberty to join in such a blessed work [cheers]. He rejoiced in meeting his dear brethren on common ground. They were regiments, indeed, of varied name, and in many respects differing in their uniform; but they were all engaged against the grand, common enemies—sin, unbelief, worldliness, and every form of moral and spiritual evil. They might have a peculiar interest in their own battalion and their own regiment, and it was true church feeling which brought him there. These were days in which it became all the true friends of the reformation cordially to unite together [cheers]. It was evident that an unclean spirit from the mouth of the false prophet had gone widely abroad through the churches of Christ, to deceive the nations of the earth. During the French revolution, popery was materially crippled; but since the peace, its spirit had greatly increased. There had been a revival of the order of jesuits, and their extraordinary exertions were very striking. He had received a letter from the Bishop of Calcutta, stating the efforts they were making to disseminate their principles in India. But he (Mr B.) was thankful to state that the war was being carried into the capital of the pope [hear]. A prayer-meeting had been held there; but the pope had put it down, so far as its regular meeting was concerned. He had, however, received a letter from Rome, in which it was stated that a protestant missionary meeting had recently been held there, at which the sum of £50 was collected. The pope was in great consternation about it, and had called a special prayer-meeting, to be held for three days, to pray to the Virgin Mary, in consequence of the tribulation and danger in which the church was placed [hear, hear]. It became them, as protestants, by means of tracts and other publications, to spread the great evangelical truths of the reformation far and wide throughout the world. Every advantage of commerce, wealth, and eminence, was a sacred trust, for the discharge of which they were responsible. Let them, however, remember that it was only by the power of the Holy Spirit that their efforts could be made effectual, and that it was only by fervent, earnest, and united prayer that the blessing could be obtained. Looking up to the Lord of all for his blessing upon the seed they were scattering, they would reap in due time, if they fainted not [cheers].

Mr J. Sherman, who was received with great applause, said it was delightful, at the present period, to get to a spot where there was no contention [hear, hear]. Parties now seemed so high and so violent that it was pleasant to find such an oasis in the desert of controversy whereon they might meet together as brethren, at a time when the doctrines of the reformation were repudiated and popery was said to be advancing. The period might be approaching when Christians would, whether they would or no, be obliged to unite to withstand one common enemy [cheers]. He rejoiced in the simplicity and catholicity of its designs, which, without taking up controversy, circulated pure truth, plain and simple to every capacity. He rejoiced at the excellent and orderly manner in which the business of the society was conducted. He had no notion of a Christian not being a man of business. It was delightful to contemplate the efforts of this society, not only at home, but abroad; and the effects produced by those exertions no tongue could express. He had then a member of his own church, once a drunkard, who was converted by the perusal of one of these little messengers of mercy, who for five years had continued a consistent follower of the Redeemer [cheers]. Many persons had been induced to close their shops on the Sabbath, by the circulation of the tract on the Lord's day, by the instrumentality of a little girl six years of age [cheers]. And by the reading of "Bogue on the New Testament," a celebrated German infidel had been brought to the feet of Christ. He trusted, with these encouragements, they would emulate other institutions in their attempts to fill the world with the Redeemer's glory [cheers].

The resolution was then put and carried.

Mr H. Hughes, secretary to the London Hibernian society, said, that, in rising to defend the principles of the Religious Tract society, he might, without assuming the attributes of royalty, style himself "Defender of the Faith" [laughter]. The new buildings lately erected by the society had been, by some, deemed expensive and unnecessary; but he considered it called for and justified, especially as not a farthing of the contributions to the society's funds had been expended in the matter. He rejoiced that the society embraced Ireland in its benevolence. If England had much to answer for, with respect to the wrongs of that unhappy country, the least they could now do, by way of atonement, was to send into her destitute districts the publications of this society, in addition to the exertions of other institutions in her behalf. As regarded the union poor houses, whose wan and forlorn occupants were the subjects of a rigid economy and a repelling bounty, it was their duty to pour the balm of heavenly consolation on their wounded spirits, and to tell them of habitations in the skies where desolation and poverty could never enter. Another destitute locality to which he would direct their attention was the factories, where, from whatever cause, was found the atmosphere of physical debility and moral contamination. If it were true that such labours were necessary to the national prosperity, luxury,

and wealth, the least they could do was to endeavour to supply an antidote to the evil by leading their thoughts to heaven and eternity, by means of the tracts and papers of this society. A remarkable feature in the operations of the society was the large circulation of its most evangelical works. 25,000 copies of "The Anxious Inquirer" had been circulated during the last eight years; 250,000 of Richmond's "Annals of the Poor" in two years; 40,000 of the tract on the Lord's day in the same period [cheers]. And these works would prove infinitely more beneficial than many which were sent into the world inculcating merely the dogmas of an earthly philosophy. Human benevolence might do much, but it was only the love of Christ brought home with power to the heart which could invigorate the energies of the soul, and induce a consistent course of love towards God and man [cheers]. He had great pleasure in moving:—

"That this meeting rejoices in the wide extent of the society's operations in the United Kingdom by the gratuitous distribution of its tracts, and the numerous libraries which have been granted, on reduced terms, to Sunday and day schools, to union poor houses, to factories, and to many destitute districts, particularly in Ireland."

Mr R. KING, of Cork, in rising to second the resolution, said there was one feature in the general character of this institution which he thought must commend itself to every enlightened and reflecting mind. Not only was Christian union recognised and maintained in all its operations without requiring either restriction or compromise on the part of its friends, but it was especially adapted to the character of the age. It was essentially popular in its practical operations; while antiquated monopolies, ecclesiastical and otherwise, that had been esteemed venerable in past ages, were crumbling before the power of popular energy and popular intelligence, it was especially delightful to find that the friends of their common protestantism were popularising protestant truth for the general good of the public mind. While scepticism; assuming various names, was labouring hard to sap the foundations of society —while socialism, Owenism, and various other *isms*, were seeking to delude and degrade the mind of the lower classes of the people, it was encouraging to find that this society was instrumental in vanquishing the foe by his own weapons [cheers]. This institution was diffusing the truth, sowing the seed broad-cast, without stopping in its angelical flight to wait for the ripening harvest. But he would make a few remarks more especially with regard to Ireland. It was his privilege to bear testimony to the great efficiency with which the labours of the society had been conducted in that country. He had frequently rejoiced at the liberality and the munificence with which appeals from Ireland had been responded to by the committee. Good results had followed, and instances of saving efficacy had attended the distribution and the reading of the societies publications. He had been much engaged in preaching in the open air in most of the Roman Catholic towns in the south-west and midland districts of Ireland. Upon one occasion, on his return, a lady supplied him with a number of tracts, one of which contained a portion of the epistle of Peter. The people of Ireland were not now deterred by the presence of a Roman Catholic priest, and would listen with interest to the preaching of the gospel. On one occasion he provided himself with a large number of these tracts and went to preach on the steps of a court-house. It was market-day, and there were several uninteresting fellows gathered around the iron rails, who had provided themselves with cabbage-leaves and brick-bats. He told them that on the preceding day he had preached in Carlow to a great crowd, and having spoken loud he was afraid he should not make himself heard, and he therefore invited those without the rails to come inside, and he would make them hear. They did not expect such an invitation, but accepted it. Three or four females, who knew he was going to preach, stood by him. The service was commenced by singing, in which they assisted him. He then said, "Now, boys, if you will be quiet we will sing." He then gave out a couple of verses of the beautiful hymn commencing—

"When I survey the wondrous cross."

The verses were sung, and he then desired them to remain quiet while he engaged in prayer; they listened, after which he said, "Now, boys, I'm going to give you a sermon of St Peter's." He then read the third and fourth chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, and expounded them, assuring them that there was no mistake about their containing a sermon of St Peter's, reported by infallible authority. In a short time the cabbage-leaves and brick-bats were thrown away, and they listened to him with the greatest attention. At the close he stated that he would leave them a few letters of St Peter, referring to the tracts which he had received. As he passed through the crowd he soon found his pockets become empty [cheers]. He then went to meet a coach, about two miles off, and one of the congregation offered to convey his coat. On arriving at the coach-office he found that several of the people whom he had been addressing nad arrived before him, anxious to procure copies of the tract, assuming that he had a supply of them in his traveling-bag [laughter and loud cheers]. When the coach arrived he was sent away with their hearty blessings, and three cheers for "St Peter's preacher" [laughter and cheers]. Some of the parties had since very industriously sought the word of God, in order that they might read St Peter's sermon, and a large number of copies had been distributed. Some people were alarmed at the aggressions of popery, and thought that they were going to return to the moral midnight of the middle ages. He would say to such, let them dismiss their fears. He sympathised not with the feeling of alarm which existed in many minds. Ireland was the last of the nations of Europe to come under the domination of Rome. It maintained independent Christianity for centuries after other nations had been laid prostrate before the papal see, and he believed that if Christian brethren were but faithful to the principles of spiritual protestantism, Ireland would soon be found to throw off allegiance to the see of Rome, assert the rights of Christian liberty, and stand forth in the glorious moral emancipation with which Christ makes his people free. Let England arise, in the name of God and truth, and wipe off her national debt to Ireland [applause]. If there were those who would prefer going back to the monkish ages, let them indulge in their darkness; but let British Christians, in the name of heaven, listen to the voice of God, and put forth their intelligent and enlightened efforts to save and bless their fellow-men. There were some who would wish to exclude themselves in a position of isolation from the common mass of mankind. There were some would prefer an icy palace in Russia, to the enlivening and balmy breezes of old England, or the more western breezes of Erin-go-Bragh [cheers]. Let them, however, breathe the breath of Christian love, and melt their icy palaces to the ground. There were some who said that if all the books written for the last fifty years were destroyed, the church of Christ would lose nothing. A Mohammedan conqueror once said, in reference to the greatest library in the world, "Every book that agrees with the Koran is useless; if it disagrees with it, then it is unnecessary; therefore let them all be destroyed;" and they were employed for some weeks in heating the baths of the city with these books. There had been things written within the last ten years, which might be well employed in preparing hot baths for some invalids, who might thereby be saved the expense of a journey to Rome [laughter and cheers]. Were these publications destroyed, the Christian church might not be said to have gained a great loss [laughter]. Let the friends of scriptural protestant truth unite in sustaining this society, which had been formed for disseminating, not tracts for time, but, tracts for eternity [loud cheers].

The CHAIRMAN in submitting the resolution, wished to make a remark in reference to some observations which had fallen from Mr Hughes. He did not question that that gentlemen had accurately stated his own impressions, but he (the Chairman) was fearful lest their friends might entertain an opinion respecting the factory population, which they did not deserve [cheers]. That gentleman had spoken of young persons as exposed to the moral contamination of factories. He had lived in Manchester forty years, and he did not believe that there was a better clad or a better conducted population to be found, taking them numbers for numbers, in any part of the kingdom. There were ministers on that platform who could corroborate that statement. He had been connected with Sunday schools for thirty years; and some of the most consistent teachers were females employed in factories [hear, hear]. In the present state of affairs, it must be expected that exaggerated statements would go forth; but he wished it to be understood, that he did not impugn the motives of Mr Hughes. With reference to short hours, he thought it was advisable that no child should be allowed to work in a factory before it was ten years of age, and that those from thirteen to eighteen should be allowed to attend evening schools. If that plan were adopted, it would afford great satisfaction [loud cheers].

Mr J. J. FREEMAN rose to move—

"That this meeting has heard, with much satisfaction, that the society's pubtications continue to be successfully distributed in British India, and in our extensive colonies; and they rejoice to find that arrangements are being made for the enlarged issue of tracts and books in China, believing that the press will be an important agency in connexion with Christian missions, for making known, in that immense empire, 'the unsearchable riches of Christ.'"

A few years ago some intelligent foreigners visited this country; and he conducted them to several institutions of art and science. At the close of the day, he inquired which they liked best. They replied, that the first they visited appeared to them so wonderful, that they at once concluded that it could not be surpassed. But, on visiting the second, their approbation was still greater; and after they had seen them all, they knew not which to prefer. So it was with the various religious institutions of the age. The man must have a most extraordinary development of the organ of comparison, which could place each society in its proper scale of importance. He would place them all, as a beautiful wreath or chaplet, around the brow of the Christian church, intertwining and interleaving with each other [hear, hear]. But without disparaging the rest, he thought that the Bible, the Missionary, and the Tract Societies occupied a foremost place [hear]. As Moses, when engaged in war with the adversaries of Israel, leaned upon Aaron and Hur, so the Missionary Society leaned upon the Bible and Tract Societies [cheers]. The resolution referred to India. Religious education was excluded from the schools sustained there by government. But it was a cheering fact that in the schools connected with Mr Duff, there were at least eight hundred intelligent Hindoo youths, all receiving Christian instruction; and in connexion with the missionary schools thousands of youths were being trained in a knowledge of the truth. He regretted that the law was still sanctioned by which, if a native renounced Hindooism and embraced Christianity, he forfeited his patrimony. This country was thus guilty of placing an impediment in the way of diffusing Christianity. This society had distributed nearly 400,000,000 of publications; but, notwithstanding that large amount, it was only one to two persons and a half. In his visit to the West Indies he had seen the advantages that would result from the distribution of religious tracts, and he trusted that the society would be able to increase its grants to that part of the world [cheers].

Dr DAVIES briefly seconded the resolution, which was then put and carried.

Mr SUTTER, missionary from Bangalore, rose to move—

"That this meeting, having heard, with much pleasure, of the successful labours of the devoted colporteurs in France and America, in circulating religious publications, trusts that similar agents will be employed for the benefit of the destitute districts of our own country."

He gave an interesting detail of the progress of religion in his native country, Germany, and stated that there was now an intense desire manifested there for the holy scriptures, and that they were deeply studied. He then referred to his labours in India, and adverted to the encouragement afforded for the dissemination of the gospel. European education and literature were gaining ground every day. He had had several young intelligent Brahmins under his care, whose attainments in Christian knowledge had exceeded his most sanguine expectations. Only a few weeks ago he received several letters from them, and learned that through the instrumentality of a tract published by this society, and sent to India, one of these Brahmins had been truly converted to God. Three of them had been baptized. It was an affecting circumstance that the moment Christianity was embraced by them, they were reduced to beggary. The youth to whom he had referred was thus situated, but still his love of Christ was sufficiently strong to enable him to overcome all temptation [cheers].

Mr T. SMITH briefly seconded the resolution, which was put and agreed to.

Mr ASTERLAG, of Basle, moved, and Mr JONES seconded, a vote of thanks to the Chairman, which was briefly acknowledged by that gentleman.

The doxology was then sung, and the meeting separated.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

THE fortieth anniversary meeting of this society was held yesterday in Exeter hall, under the presidency of Lord Bexley. The meeting was not probably so well attended as on former occasions, for the room was not more than three-fourths filled.

Amongst the gentlemen on the platform we observed the Marquis of Cholmondeley, the Earl of Chichester, Viscount Sandon, M.P., the Bishops of Worcester and Cashell, Lord Teignmouth, Mr Evans, M.P., Mr Plumptre, M.P., General Sir J. Bathurst, the Dean of Salisbury, the Archdeacon of Winchester, Honourable B. W. Noel, &c.

Lord BEXLEY, on taking the chair, apologised for his inability to address the meeting in consequence of recent severe illness, and, at his lordship's desire, the secretary, Mr G. Brandram, read a brief address, penned by the noble lord, in which he expressed his unabated zeal for the welfare of the association.

The SECRETARY then read the report for the year, in which it was stated that the society had now translated the Bible into 138 languages and dialects, and had, during the past year, issued yearly 1,000,000 copies. The total receipts of the year were £98,000.

The Marquis of CHOLMONDELEY moved the adoption of the report. He expressed his great satisfaction at its favourable character, and especially adverted to a grant which had been made to the Wesleyan Missionary society, and which, he said, demonstrated the importance of co-operating with all Christians in inculcating the word of God, which was the only infallible standard of faith and righteousness.

The Lord Bishop of CASHEL seconded the resolution. He had been a friend to the society from its origin, and he loved it, especially on account of its truly catholic character. He regarded it, indeed, as the fountain of all Christian societies. In Ireland its operations were of inestimable value to the church. He remembered the time when there was no Bible in the Irish language. They had given them the Bible printed in that tongue, and the plant had brought forth its fruit in due season. Hundreds had been "born again" in that country, by being made acquainted with the word of God; and knowing this fact, he felt it a duty to bear his testimony, as a protestant bishop of the church, to the utility of the society's operations. He prayed God to bless it, and increase its operations a hundredfold.

The resolution was carried.

The Lord Bishop of WORCESTER moved the next resolution. Some years ago, when he became bishop of Sodor and Man, he had committed himself to the principles of this society, and now that he was in a position of still greater importance he was equally ready to support those principles. He regretted much that there should be any difference of opinion in the church as to this society. For his own part, he believed the martyrs of protestantism would have supported the principle of sending forth the Bible among all nations, and that if the spirit of those who opposed the society had prevailed at the period of the reformation, we might have had no reformation at all [cheers]. The circumstances of the present time rendered it, in his opinion, especially incumbent on them to support such a society. The influential party in the church appeared inclined to go the length even of unprotestantising the church; and he felt, with his right reverend brother who had just spoken, that it was, therefore, the more incumbent on them to spread abroad her sacred tenets. He concluded by moving:—

"That this meeting desires gratefully to recognise the goodness of Almighty God in having enabled the society to take so large a share in the distribution of the Holy Scriptures among the nations of the earth; and feels encouraged by the success which has attended its operations during the past year, by the enlarged resources now intrusted to it, and by the most

important labours still opening before it, to redouble their zea in carrying out its simple and beneficent design."

Mr TREFFIELD, of the Episcopal Methodist church in New York, seconded the resolution; expatiating upon the blessing of the Bible to the poor, and giving instances of the hope, the joy, and the comfort which it had conveyed to the distressed.

This resolution was also carried; and the meeting, having been addressed by the Hon. Baptist Noel, the Archdeacon of Winchester, and other clergymen, adjourned, after voting its thanks to their noble president, Lord Bexley, who, it should be stated, had previously been compelled by weakness to resign the chair to the Earl of Chichester.

LONDON CITY MISSION.

THIS society held its ninth annual meeting in the large room, Exeter hall, on Friday last. The chair was taken at eleven o'clock by Mr Plumptre, M.P. The room was crowded in every part. The Secretary read the report, which occupied upwards of an hour and a half in reading. It consisted of many interesting accounts of the labours of the missionaries, and of their success in rescuing from vice and crime several hundred persons. It also stated that the British and Foreign Bible Society had voted five thousand copies of the New Testament and Psalter. The funds the last year had exceeded the amount received the preceding year by £2,027 9s. 2½d., being £8,781 14s. 1½d. The expenses were upwards of £700 per month, which went to pay 101 missionaries and current expenses. The report also announced the formation of a new society by the Bishops of London and Winchester, for the purpose of employing persons to go from house to house to read and expound the scriptures. This statement was received with loud cheers.

The meeting was addressed by Messrs York, Sherman, and Leifchild.

The Hon. BAPTIST NOEL rose to second a resolution. He congratulated the meeting on the prosperous state of the society, and on the peace and harmony that had characterised their proceedings, both in committee and amongst their agents. He held in his hand an Anglo-catholic journal, in which allusion is made to a letter said to have been written by him to the students of a certain college, requesting them to leave the establishment, and to join a new religious society not in connexion with the established church. He totally denied any knowledge of that letter. He never would join in the attempt that was then making to unprotestantise England. He loved the evangelical clergy of the church more than any other class in the world. They were the evangelical comrades with whom he had to encounter Christ's enemies. He had not left the church, nor did he mean to leave it. He would not impute deliberate falsehood to those who had propagated the report. He imagined they had made that suggestion in their hearts; having been brought up with such exclusive feelings, they could not understand what was meant by hundreds of persons as well as himself joining with the good men he then saw about him congregated for good objects. The honourable gentleman then alluded to the several matters mentioned in the report, and sat down amidst great cheering.

Captain Sir E. PARRY moved a vote of thanks to the officers and committee.

After speeches from Messrs G. CLAYTON and CARR GLYN, the meeting dispersed.

BRIDPORT, DORSET.—The congregational church worshiping in Barrack street, Bridport, have given a cordial and unanimous invitation to Mr T. Wallace, late of Petersfield, Hants, to become their pastor, which invitation he has accepted, and purposes commencing his labours immediately.

ISLINGTON GREEN CHAPEL.—We understand that Mr John J. Brown, of Bristol college, has accepted the invitation of the church and congregation at Islington Green, and will probably enter on his ministerial labours early in July.

HEACHAM, NORFOLK.—Mr James Cooper, who resigned his charge at Middlewich, Cheshire, last midsummer and has since September been preaching at Heacham, near Lynn, Norfolk, to the church and congregation lately under the care of Mr C. Hickman, has accepted the unanimous invitation of the church to become their pastor.

BATLEY.—Mr John Hotham, now a student of Airedale college, has accepted an unanimous invitation to become pastor of the church and congregation assembling for worship in the independent chapel, Batley.

COLEFORD.—The recognition of Mr Thomas Thomas, (formerly of Carmarthen college) as pastor of the independent church at Coleford, Gloucestershire, took place on Wednesday, April 10th. Mr Pinn, Whitchurch, commenced the service by reading the scriptures and prayer. Mr David Rees, of Llanelly (Carmarthenshire), delivered an excellent discourse, on the nature and constitution of a Christian church. Mr Thomas Rees, of Chepstow, asked the usual questions. Mr J. Horlick, Mitchel Dean, offered a prayer for the minister. Mr T. Loader, of Monmouth, delivered the charge. Mr B. Tentlyn, of Little Dean, concluded with prayer, Mr David Blow, of Monmouth, preached to the people in the evening.

STOCKWELL.—Mr David Thomas, of Chesham, has accepted the unanimous invitation of the church and congregation of Stockwell new chapel (the late Mr Thomas Jackson's) to become their pastor.

BRITISH SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL AMONG THE JEWS.—The subscribers and friends to this institution assembled very numerously to celebrate its first anniversary, at Freemasons' hall, on Friday evening, April 26—J. Deane Paul, Esq., in the chair. Mr H. Herschell having opened the proceedings by a most appropriate prayer, Dr Henderson read the Report, which commenced by devoutly acknowledging the Divine favour and benediction which had been afforded to the committee for their encouragement at the commencement of the society's career. With reference to publication, it stated that a volume of lectures on the conversion of the Jews, by ministers of different denominations, had been very favourably received. The committee, availing themselves of the kindness of Mr Bagster, in agreeing to furnish them with an impression of the Epistle to the Hebrews, from the stereotype plates of his Hebrew New Testament, had ordered a thousand copies to be struck off for circulation among such Jews as were familiar with their ancient and sacred language. They had likewise prepared a selection of passages from the Old Testament on the leading doctrines of revelation, including all the prophecies of the Messiah. An edition of a thousand copies of our Lord's sermon on the mount, under the title of "The Prophet like unto Moses," had been issued in English. A quarterly prayer-meeting, for the conversion of Israel, had been instituted, at which several ministers conducted the devotional part of the services, and an address was delivered on some subject immediately connected with the spiritual interest of the Jews. The committee had also established a lecture directly addressed to the Jews, to be delivered at periods suiting the convenience of ministers who kindly undertook to preach it. One of the earliest objects to which the committee had directed their attention, was the selection of suitable agents to be employed in carrying out their designs for the good of the Jews. Four zealous and devoted men of God, three of whom were of the stock of Israel, were labouring in their respective spheres. It was the desire of the committee that one of them should become a regular salaried agent, but he had conscientiously declined all temporal support, and devoted those portions of his time which he could spare from the honourable avocations upon which he was dependent for his livelihood. Another converted Jew, of a wealthy family, who has sacrificed his all for Christ, and had been recently baptised and added to his church, had placed his services entirely at the command of the society. Though, in some instances, the agents had been regarded with suspicion, and often treated with rude contemptuous language when visiting the Jews, yet in many cases they had been received with civility, thanked for their visits, and requested to call again. The committee had, after mature deliberation, resolved that all temporal relief to necessitous Jews, whether inquirers or converts, must be supplied by the benevolence of private Christians, or those Christian communities with which they might connect themselves, so that no charge could justly be brought against them of their encouraging hypocrisy by appropriating any portion of the funds of the institution to such a purpose. The committee owed much to the zeal aad activity of the ladies' committee, which was formed in November last, and in that short period had raised upwards of £100 for the funds of the society. In conclusion, the committee earnestly recommend the interests of the society to the ministers of Christ, whom they entreated to deliver lectures on the subject of the Jews, and to make them objects of more special and fervent public prayer.—The CHAIRMAN then presented his accounts as treasurer, from which it appeared, that the total receipts of the society amounted to £922 11s. 11d., the expenditure to £634 5s. 5d., leaving a balance in hand of £298 6s. 6d.—Dr BENNETT moved—

"That the report now read be approved, and that it be printed and circulated under the direction of the committee."

The resolution was seconded by Mr J. J. FREEMAN, and carried unanimously.

Dr WILSON, missionary from Bombay, in moving the second resolution said, the society had particularly to do with the British Jews; but, according to its regulations, it had to maintain a friendly correspondence with the Free church of Scotland, whose missions are in foreign lands. It was as a voluntary representative of the Free church of Scotland that he appeared before them.

The resolution, which was seconded by Dr MORISON and carried unanimously, was as follows:—

"That this meeting hails with great satisfaction the increased attention which is being excited to the claims which the conversion of the Jewish people has upon the prayers and active exertions of the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that it rejoices in the adoption of every scriptural measure for effecting that important object, and pledges itself to employ its influence in procuring for this society a larger degree of countenance and support."

The third resolution was moved by Mr ELIJAH HOOLE, and seconded by Mr OWEN CLARKE. It was as follows:—

"That this meeting has learned, with feelings of unmingled reprobation, the cruel edict of the Russian government, by which half a million of Jews have been ordered to leave the soil on which their forefathers had lived for centuries, and remove into regions where they will be cut off from intercourse with their brethren in other parts of Europe; that it sincerely hopes the representations which have been made to that government upon the subject may prove successful in procuring a mitigation of the evil; and earnestly prays that the measure may be overruled for the spiritual good of the Jewish community, by inducing them seriously to inquire into the causes of their long-protracted and multiplied calamities."

The officers of the Society were then appointed, and thanks voted to the chairman, and the meeting adjourned.

MISSIONARY MEETING IN KAFFERLAND.—A letter received from Mr Chalmers, missionary, dated 2nd January, 1844, communicates the following interesting particulars of the proceedings of the Missionary Institution in Africa:—"Yesterday was a day remarkable in Kafferland, from the circumstance that a general missionary meeting was held here by the members of the churches connected with the stations of the London Missionary Society, and both sections of the Glasgow Missionary Society. The morning was showery, yet upwards of fifty male members arrived at this station about noon. At one o'clock they sat down to a substantial dinner, prepared and provided for them by the members of the church connected with this station. The female school room was lent to them for their accommodation on the occasion. After they had finished their repast they assembled in the church with the inhabitants of the place for the transaction of business. They elected for themselves as chairman, JOHN MUIR, native schoolmaster at Burn's hill, who, after praise and prayer to God, introduced the subject of their present meeting, and expatiated on the utility of Christian missions, and what missions had done for them who were now assembled. He then called on those who were present, and who felt inclined to utter their sentiments, to do so, an opportunity being now afforded them; and many took advantage thereof. Native eloquence was poured forth in a flowing manner, and to good purpose. In very many cases that eloquence appeared to be sanctified by the word of God and by prayer. One man said, 'We are here assembled, but not to smear our bodies with red clay and grease, and to join the heathen dances in what is sinful and wicked. We are here assembled, not to excite the sorcerer to his guilty deeds of darkness, at the same time trembling from head to foot lest he should pounce upon us. No, but we have come together to thank God who has so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life—and He has called on us Kaffers to receive that Word which declares the gift; and to keep that gift in our hearts. Do we come to thank God with our mouths only? No, we have assembled together to excite each other to thank Him, by giving some of our substance to assist that work which has taught us and our children that we have immortal souls—that there is a world beyond the grave, to which we are fast hastening; and to know that we are sinners, and to flee to the cross of Jesus for pardon and peace. You know as well as I do, that the waggon cannot move without the oxen; it would never move—it would stand still, and rot where it stood. The word of God is the waggon, and money is the oxen to carry the waggon around the world. That word was brought to us from the other side of the great waters, and it has remained with us until now. But what have we done to assist the oxen? Nothing; we must excite each other to-day to love and good works, and give our goods to sustain the oxen to carry the wagon of the gospel to all who have ears to hear it. Do not say, "I have got no money, therefore I cannot assist." Remember ye not that goats are money, cows are money, oxen are money, horses are money, the produce of our fields is money? Any of these things, or all of these things, if we have a heart to do so, we can give to assist the waggon to run, run, run, and to keep it with us too.' Another said, 'God has been kind to me—he has given me many cattle; he has blessed me. I once gave a cow to assist in the erection of this Chumie church. I am not tired. I will now give another cow and five shillings.' Such is a specimen of their speeches. The meeting was kept up with much interest for three hours. A considerable quantity of material, fitted to assist the waggon of the gospel, was subscribed—some in cattle, others in goats; some in wheat, and others in money."

THE LATE HOUR SYSTEM DESTRUCTIVE OF DOMESTIC HAPPINESS.—The eager and unlawful desire for the speedy acquisition of wealth, so characteristic of modern times, combined with the no less unlawful and injurious system of competition displayed in the present mode of conducting business, presents an insuperable obstacle to domestic happiness. It may with truth be said, that the tradesmen of the present day enjoy little, or none, of those exquisite pleasures which arise from a due cultivation of social atachments and duties. The hours devoted to business, indeed, prevent it. Morning no sooner arrives than the cares of the shop commence. In too many instances, suspicions in regard to the proper conduct and steady attention to business, of their young men, which, if founded in fact, in most cases owe their origin to the system itself—the anxieties and turmoils of trade transactions—these, and others necessary duties, keep them in close and unremitting confinement until noon. The dinner quickly dispatched—but ends to recommence the same anxious cares. An equally brief space of time is devoted to the hour of tea, a meal which we usually view as the most social repast of the day. The toils of business might at this period appropriately conclude. The married man might seek refuge from anxiety and care in the bosom of his family. The fireside of his own cheerful home would form the delightful centre of social feelings and affections. The energies of the mind and body, thus invigorated and refreshed, would be appropriately renewed for the labours of the ensuing day. The present state of trade, however, denies these social gratifications. The love of lucre, with an influence destructive as the canker-worm, casts its withering blight upon all rational recreation. Those feelings, which, if cultivated, would form the richest sources of enjoyment, are either altogether sacrificed, or, if enjoyed to a limited extent, the gratification loses half its relish for want of due cultivation. Such are some of the social and domestic evils which result to tradesmen themselves from the system of late hours in business.—[From an excellent and instructive pamphlet entitled "The wrongs of our youth," by Dr Grindrod of Manchester.]

WESLEYAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY. — The anniversary meeting of the members of this influential body was held yesterday at Exeter hall. The proceedings were advertised to commence at eleven o'clock, but long before that time every available place was occupied, and many who had possessed themselves of tickets were obliged to go away disappointed. The Right Hon. Sir G. Rose, G.C.B., filled the chair, and was supported by Mr P. M. Stuart, M.P., Capt. Elliot, R.N., Mr Farmer, the treasurer, Drs Wilson, Bunting, Newton, Dixon, and Alder, Wesleyan ministers, Messrs Beecham, Hoole, James Hamilton, Stuart, Collinson, Reece, Herschell, Wangle, W. Fox, S. Young, Jobson, Scott, M'Owan, &c. The Chairman addressed the meeting at some length, and in an interesting speech, laying particular stress, as himself a churchman, upon the necessity of encouraging that kind and kindred feeling between the church of England and the Wesleyan body, which he was glad to see to a very considerable extent did exist. Dr Bunting and Mr Beecham then read the annual reports, which stated that in Ireland, as well as in Germany, France, Switzerland, Gibraltar, the south of India, Ceylon, New South Wales, Australia Felix, South and Western Australia, Van Diemen's Land, the Friendly Islands, the Feejee Islands, the Albany, Caffraria, and Bechuana districts, Sierra Leone, the West India islands, and British North America, the society's missions were generally in a highly satisfactory state. At Wairau, in New Zealand, however, the mission, in consequence of the melancholy collision between the authorities and the natives, has been suspended; and in the Cape of Good Hope sickness had created great ravages amongst the missionaries. The society has at present 274 stations in various parts of the world, 387 missionaries, 1,640 other paid agents, 4,884 unpaid agents, 101,137 full and accredited church members, 5,066 persons on trial for memberships, 4,307 scholars, and seven printing presses. The gross receipts during the year 1843, including a previous balance of £123 13s. 6d., amounted to £110,620 0s. 3d.; and the expenditure to £112,908 5s. 2d.; being an increase over the income of £2,288 4s. 11d.—the old debt of £30,000 being, however, now completely paid off. On the motion of Mr P. M. Stewart, M.P., seconded by the Rev. Mr Reece, and Dr Wilson, of Bombay, the report was unanimously adopted. A resolution, proposed by the Rev. Mr Waugh, of Ireland, and seconded by the Rev. J. Hamilton, and the Rev. G. Macdonald, expressive of gratitude for the beneficial results which had attended the operations of the society, was likewise agreed to unanimously; as were also several other resolutions, in the course of which the Rev. R. Young, the Rev. J. Crother, the Rev. F. Jobson, and others, addressed the meeting, which did not separate till an advanced hour of the day.—*Times.*

CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF SCOTLAND.—The thirty-second anniversary of the Congregational Union of Scotland, was held in Dundee the week before last. The proceedings commenced on Tuesday morning with a prayer meeting in Lindsay street chapel. A public meeting, in behalf of the Glasgow Theological Academy, was held the same evening in Lindsay street chapel. In the course of the proceedings, Dr Wardlaw alluded to certain painful circumstances connected with the conduct of some of the students at the academy, whose deportment and opinions were at variance with the doctrines of the body to which they belonged—denying, as they did, the influence of the Holy Spirit in the conversion of sinners. They should not attempt to conceal this schism from the public, although it was the only time during the long period of thirty years that anything had occurred to disturb the state of the academy. A public breakfast took place in the Thistle Hall on Wednesday morning, and was attended by nearly two hundred ladies and gentlemen. At this meeting it was resolved to appoint Mr Cullen, Leith, and Mr Alex. Smith, Dundee, as their representatives to the ensuing Anti-state-church Conference in London. It was likewise agreed that a petition, subscribed by the ministers presently in town connected with the Congregational Union of Scotland, should be presented to both houses of parliament, praying for the abolition of religious tests in universities. A social meeting was held the same evening in Ward chapel. In the course of an address, which drew forth a succession of hearty plaudits from the audience, Mr Alexander of Edinburgh took occasion to administer a rebuke to the "Free Church" for the manner in which they had been interfering with the interests of certain congregational churches in remote districts. The congregational body could not be accused of any want of feeling towards the ministers of the "Free Church"—who, by the bye, were not so "free" as they supposed themselves—and he would be glad to see them extending the same friendly feeling towards the congregational ministers labouring in remote districts, as they do in Glasgow and Edinburgh towards Dr Wardlaw and himself. All they wanted was a fair field and no favour.

SHEFFIELD.—On the 16th of April, in Queen street chapel, Sheffield, Mr J. P. Sunderland, of Airedale college, was set apart to the work of the ministry amongst the heathen. Mr Edward Tasker, of Sheffield, gave out the hymns; Mr W. H. Stowell, theological tutor of Rotherham college, read the scriptures and engaged in prayer; Mr G. Smith, of Poplar, London, gave an interesting and touching introductory address, describing the scene of labour; Mr J. H. Muir, of Sheffield, asked the questions; Mr W. B. Landells, the young minister's pastor, offered the ordination prayer; and Mr W. Scott, Theological tutor of Airedale college, gave the charge. The newly ordained missionary, destined for the South Seas, will sail in the new missionary ship, the "John Williams."

Advertisements.

THE ANTI-STATE-CHURCH CONFERENCE.

THOSE REPRESENTATIVES to the ANTI-STATE-CHURCH CONFERENCE whose names or addresses have not been correctly given in any of the lists hitherto published, are requested to send them by post, addressed to the Rev. Dr Cox, Triangle, Hackney.

F. A. COX, E. MIALL, J. M. HARE, } Secretaries.

Guildhall Coffee-house, May 6, 1844.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY,

For the Abolition of Slavery and the Slave Trade throughout the World.

THE ANNUAL MEETING of this Society will take place in EXETER HALL on FRIDAY, 17th May, 1844. The Right Honourable Lord BROUGHAM will preside. The Doors will be open at Ten, and the Chair taken at Eleven o'Clock precisely.

JOHN SCOBLE, Secretary.

Admission by Tickets only, which may be had at the Society's Office, 27, New Broad street; Thomas Ward and Co., 27, Paternoster row; Hatchard and Son, 187, Piccadilly; James Nisbet and Co., Berners street; Jacob Post, Lower road, Islington; Joseph Sterry and Son, 156, High street, Borough; Jeremiah Clark, 13, Moorgate street; and Charles Gilpin, 5, Bishopsgate street without.

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

SERVICES at the FIFTIETH GENERAL MEETING of the LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

MONDAY, MAY 6.

EVENING.—ST JOHN'S CHAPEL, Bedford row.—The Rev. SAMUEL PHILLIPS, Vicar of Llanddewi, Glamorganshire, will preach on behalf of the Society. Service to begin at Half-past Six o'clock.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8.

MORNING, SURREY CHAPEL.—Rev. ROBERT NEWTON, D.D., of Manchester, Secretary of the Wesleyan Conference, to preach.

EVENING.—TABERNACLE.—Rev. JAMES HAMILTON, A.M., Minister of the Scotch Church, Regent square, London, to preach.

The Morning Service to commence at Half-past Ten, and the Evening at Six o'clock.

THURSDAY, MAY 9.

MORNING.—The PUBLIC MEETING will be held at EXETER HALL, in the Strand. The Chair to be taken precisely at Ten o'clock by WILLIAM EVANS, Esq., M.P.

EVENING.—An Adjourned Meeting will be held in FINSBURY CHAPEL, Finsbury circus. The Chair to be taken at Six o'clock, by the Rev. JAMES SHERMAN.

MONDAY, MAY 13.

A Meeting of the Directors of the Society, both Town and Country, will be held at the Mission House, Blomfield street, Finsbury. Chair to be taken at Eleven o'clock in the Forenoon.

EVENING.—The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be administered at the following places of worship, to those members and friends of the Society who are Stated Communicants, and who produce tickets from their respective ministers: viz.—

Sion Chapel	Rev. John Clayton, A.M.....	to preside.
Orange Street Chapel	Rev. J. J. Freeman.....	"
Falcon Square Chapel	Rev. Thomas Binney.....	"
Surrey Chapel	Rev. Andrew Reed, D.D.....	"
Claremont Chapel ..	Rev. John Ely, Leeds	"
St Thomas's Square, Hackney	Rev. T. W. Jenkyn, D.D.....	"
Stockwell Chapel....	Rev. James Bennett, D.D.	"
Kingsland Chapel ..	Rev. W. H. Stowell, Rotherham	"
Tottenham Court Rd Chapel	Rev. John Reynolds, Romsey ..	
Hanover Chapel, Peckham	Rev. John Burnet	"
Trevor Ch., Chelsea	Rev. George Clayton	"

Services to begin at Six o'clock.

A Committee for the delivery of Tickets will attend at the Mission House, Blomfield street, Finsbury, from Twelve o'clock till Three, on Monday 6th, Tuesday 7th, and Wednesday 8th, of May.

A Collection for the benefit of the Institution will be made at each of the places.

By order of the Directors,

ARTHUR TIDMAN, J. J. FREEMAN, JOHN ARUNDEL, } Secretaries.

Mission House, Blomfield street, Finsbury, May 3, 1844.

COLONIAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

THE EIGHTH ANNUAL MEETING of the COLONIAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY will be held in FINSBURY CHAPEL, on FRIDAY EVENING, the Tenth of MAY. Chair to be taken at SIX o'clock precisely, by J. R. MILLS, Esq., Treasurer of the Society.

N.B. REPORTS WANTED.—Any friends who can forward to the Congregational Library, free of expense, copies of the Reports of this Society for the years 1837 and 1839, will greatly oblige the Committee.

ALGERNON WELLS, Secretary.

WORKS ON THE ENDOWED CHURCH.

Price Sixpence.

THE BOOK of the POOR MAN'S CHURCH.

Dedicated to the Bishop of London.

"The practical working of a state church is here truthfully pourtrayed, as it is exhibited in the page of history; and a mass of evidence is collected, the details of which, for their exhibition of sordid avarice and priestly intolerance, united with a settled enmity against all that tends to ennoble and ameliorate the condition of mankind, are almost without parallel in the history of any human institution; and must, we imagine, convince the most prejudiced of the fearful danger to which Christianity and freedom are exposed by this desolating moral plague. The facts appear to be compiled from the best and most unexceptionable authority, and are handled in a candid, though unsparing, manner. They will furnish an armoury from which the opponents of the state church may supply themselves with that most potent of all weapons—experience. Thousands who are sincere in their opposition to the establishment, must be ignorant of the black catalogue of misdeeds which our author has dragged to light. The contents throughout are a most bitter satire on the self-assumed title which the hierarchy has arrogated to itself, as 'The Poor Man's Church.' *Lucus a non lucendo.*"—*The Nonconformist.*

Just published, in small octavo, price One Shilling and Sixpence in boards,

HOWITT'S POPULAR HISTORY of PRIESTCRAFT. Abridged in two Parts.

"This abridgment has been made with much care, judgment, and ability."—*Atlas.*

"This work is well adapted to the spirit and necessities of the present times."—*Sheffield Independent.*

"We are heartily glad that the abridgment has appeared, and we trust that it will circulate through the whole population of the empire. It is admirably written, it is incalculably useful, and it is precisely what is requisite in the present circumstances of the country."—*Leeds Times.*

Just published, uniform with the above, price Sixpence each,

CONSIDERATIONS touching the LIKELIEST MEANS to REMOVE HIRELINGS out of the CHURCH. By JOHN MILTON.

A SPEECH for the LIBERTY of UNLICENSED PRINTING; addressed to the Parliament of England. By JOHN MILTON.

London: CLEAVE, Shoe Lane, Fleet Street; and, on order, of all Booksellers in Town and Country.

MUDIE'S SELECT LIBRARY, 28, Upper King street, Bloomsbury square.

Terms of Subscription, 6s. a Quarter; 21s. a Year.

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